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THE

# EARL OF GODOLPHIN, K.G.

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# THE LIFE

OF

# SIDNEY, EARL OF GODOLPHIN, K.G.

LORD HIGH TREASURER OF ENGLAND

1702 TO 1710

BY THE

HON. HUGH ELLIOT

LONDON
LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
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1888

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# PREFACE.

In publishing this volume, I desire to state that I have done my best to collect all the information in my power concerning Lord Godolphin. I am, however, conscious that no biography of Lord Godolphin can be really complete till much material which is at present entombed in family archives is rendered accessible to the author.

Of the material which I have employed in constructing this 'Life,' some is new, most of it is old, and all of it is dispersed. The material which is new has been drawn principally from manuscripts in the British Museum and Public Record Office, and comprises among other things many extracts from letters written by Sidney Godolphin to his family when he was a young and undistinguished man; the material which is old is scattered through books and prints, some of them well known, but is so mingled and confused with other matter that it has, if one may use the expression, to undergo a process of literary smelting before any result of biographical

value is obtained. My object has been to collect, arrange, and publish this material in a readable shape, and furnish to the public, to the best of my ability, some account of a man who was undoubtedly great, but who, as every reader of English history will admit, is much less known to the public generally than are most of his distinguished contemporaries.

HUGH F. ELLIOT.

*September* 1888.

# CONTENTS.


| CHAPTER | | PAGE |
|---|---|---|
| I. | THE GODOLPHIN FAMILY | 1 |
| II. | EARLY CORRESPONDENCE AND MARRIAGE | 34 |
| III. | EARLY POLITICAL LIFE: 1670–1685 | 72 |
| IV. | UNDER WILLIAM III. | 120 |
| V. | LORD HIGH TREASURER | 197 |
| VI. | ADMINISTRATION IN 1703 | 246 |
| VII. | THE ACT OF SECURITY | 275 |
| VIII. | SUNDERLAND JOINS THE GOVERNMENT | 297 |
| IX. | SPAIN AND SAVOY | 320 |
| X. | HARLEY AND GODOLPHIN—DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MARLBOROUGH AND GODOLPHIN | 357 |
| XI. | DISMISSAL AND DEATH | 401 |

THE

# EARL OF GODOLPHIN, K.G.

## CHAPTER I.

### THE GODOLPHIN FAMILY.

In some books, and especially in old ones, it is the custom to place in a frontispiece a portrait of the person whose life is to come under the notice of the reader. We shall attempt here, in some sort, to follow a fashion which has much to recommend it, only employing the pen instead of the pencil.

Sidney Godolphin, Lord High Treasurer of England, was one of those men whose merits rarely receive the full recognition which they deserve. Patient, industrious, clear-headed, and prudent, he rose to eminence by the resolute exercise of qualities which are reckoned common, but which are in fact possessed by few. His life, when it is recollected that he was only the younger son of a Cornish squire, was a most perfect success; yet we are tempted to say of him, that of all the distinguished men of whom we

have ever read, he is the least distinguished and the least conspicuous. Nearly all his famous contemporaries in politics are known by some peculiarity of genius or character. Godolphin's life by the side of theirs seems absolutely featureless. He was neither an orator, nor an author, nor a poet, nor a philosopher; he was not even remarkable for the magnificence of his living, for he always lived unpretentiously; or for the readiness of his wit, for he was reserved in manner, and we should imagine somewhat clumsy in speech. Yet Godolphin, unassuming and laborious, was undeniably one of the greatest men of his age in England; and his government in the reign of Queen Anne achieved results which, both at home and abroad, enormously affected the future welfare of the country, and which for all time to come will place an ineffaceable mark on its history.

The same vexatious indistinctness of outline half hides Godolphin even in the domain of history. Parliamentary literature is the source towards which we naturally turn to discover memorials of a great statesman; but the records of Parliament may be searched in vain for information concerning one whose whole life was absorbed in the business of politics. In Parliament, however, he undoubtedly exercised great influence, and we are told that his words were listened to as if they proceeded from an oracle; yet the few fragments of his speeches and conversations which have descended to us give us the impression that he was a sententious rather than a

skilful or persuasive speaker. Godolphin's success as a public man depends in reality rather upon his solid and useful work as an administrator and an official, than upon the brilliancy of his parliamentary capacity ; it is in the dusty archives of the Treasury that his fame lies buried.

Sidney Godolphin was a frugal and cautious finance minister. During the period that he was chief of the Treasury some of the greatest financial changes which were ever made by an English Government were first put into operation. The raising of money by life and terminable annuities,[1] the issue of exchequer bills, the establishment of the Bank of England, the funding of the National Debt, all date from this time. Yet we doubt whether any of these changes were economically more beneficial or important than the example which he set to public men of vigilantly guarding the national treasure. No reforms could be completely successful while the men whose duty it was to protect the wealth of the people preyed upon it instead. At the end of the seventeenth century English statesmen were scandalously corrupt, yet no serious charge of personal corruption was ever made against Godolphin. Even Swift, who has written everything which malice could suggest to blacken his character, acquits him of such an offence. His predecessors, one and all, amassed fortunes either through or in consequence of their office : Godolphin left office towards the

[1] Parliamentary Return, Public Income and Expenditure : Mr. Gladstone, 1869.

end of Queen Anne's reign a poorer man than he had been when he accepted it eight years before, on her accession to the throne.

The Calendar of State Papers during Godolphin's administration testifies to the care with which he scrutinised all claims on the public purse. Nothing seemed too trivial for his inspection. Thus, on March 7, 1705–6, the Treasury received a warrant for the supply of a new silver trumpet for the trumpeter of the third troop of guards. In Godolphin's handwriting is minuted on the back, 'What has become of the old one?'[1] To this scrupulous regard for the public interest, and his determination to introduce economy and method into the conduct of affairs, which had hitherto been marked by reckless extravagance and criminal confusion, it is probable that Godolphin in a large degree owes his high reputation as a financier. Daring and skilful measures such as are attributed to Charles Montague may restore public credit, but punctuality, method, and good faith can alone confirm it; and it was for his regularity and integrity that Godolphin was most highly distinguished. Yet, in spite of Godolphin's great ability as a finance minister, it was his fate during the long war of the Spanish succession greatly to increase the national burthens; on the other hand, he reduced some very objectionable expenses, and while he was the prime, or, to speak more strictly, the chief Minister of Queen Anne, we find that the annual charge for secret

[1] *Calendar of Treasury Papers: Domestic*, Anne, 1705-6.

services alone was little more than half what it had been in the reign of William III.[1]

Sidney Godolphin was of an amiable and affectionate disposition, and in an age when the goodwill of a powerful man was often bought with honours and bribes, there was no surer way of enlisting his friendship than by appealing to his personal feelings.[2] He was modest, and his modesty is happily illustrated by a short story. Lord Rochester, his predecessor in the office of Lord Treasurer, when he went out in his sedan-chair always had his white wand carried before him, that people might be aware of his approach. Godolphin, on the other hand, had the wand cut down, so that he might hide it in his chair, and thus pass unrecognised through the streets.[3]

In his spare time Sidney Godolphin was fond of horse-racing, and he had a house at Newmarket. It is said also that he gambled, but to what extent there is no certain evidence, and the vice does not seem one in which a man who was notoriously poor and frugal would indulge to great excess. He probably had a taste for the fine arts, for we find Methuen, the English ambassador at Lisbon, apprising him of a sale of pictures which was to take place in Spain. He was fond of chess,[4] and apparently also, in spite of fre-

[1] Parliamentary Return, Public Income and Expenditure: Mr. Gladstone, 1869.

[2] Duke of Marlborough to William III., Jan. 27, $16\frac{90}{91}$. Dalrymple's *Memoirs*, vol. iii. p. 248.

[3] *An Account of the Conduct of the Duchess of Marlborough*, p. 98.

[4] Additional MSS. 28056, f. 29, British Museum, Methuen to Godolphin, $\frac{\text{Jan. } 7}{\text{Dec. } 27}$, 1703.

quent attacks of gout, of Spanish and Portuguese wines, which Methuen sent him in casks.

For the rest, his person, as it has been handed down to us by the brush of Sir Godfrey Kneller, was not prepossessing, and the picture is absolutely unlike the bust which is erected near his grave in Westminster Abbey. The painter has depicted a man of solid, heavy, and placid countenancè ; the work of the sculptor, on the other hand, reveals to us a thin, anxious face, with a long and straight nose, a mouth surrounded with somewhat peevish lines, refined features, and an expression of suffering. Boyer, the historian, who had probably seen Godolphin, and must certainly have received accurate descriptions of his appearance, tells us that he was of middle stature, well-set, of strong constitution ; that his face was of a brown complexion, and somewhat disfigured by small-pox ; that his eye was quick and piercing, that his smile was sweet, that his judgment was exquisite, that his words were few and always to the purpose, and that he never promised what he could not perform.

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No part of the south coast of England is more beautiful than that which lies between the Lizard and the Land's End. For centuries the ocean has been engaged in fashioning it according to its own wayward fancy. Buttresses and caves, columns and

half sunken rocks, pyramids of stone, so carefully sized and so neatly joined as to seem the work of human hands, have been laboriously carved from the solid cliff, and have assumed the fantastic forms which delight the eye of the lover of the picturesque. So clear and blue is the unruffled water of the land-locked cove, that it appears like a gem of crystal or sapphire which earth wears in her bosom. So wild is the turmoil and confusion about each promontory, that headland and cape seem constructed only more effectually to display the terrific war which is eternally waged between land and water. Islands dot the coast; sea-birds cling to the massive and isolated rocks, or scream mid air about the dizzy precipices which overhang the surge; while the distant shores of the bay fade into an undistinguishable blue mist of sea and sky. Inland the scene is less attractive. The landscape is for the most part flat and treeless, and is divided into innumerable enclosures by walls which are generally half concealed by gorse. About three miles from Helston the monotony of the country is a little varied. Two low round hills rise gradually from the surrounding plain. They are bleak, uninteresting, and, like the rest of the country, treeless. No bold outline or jagged peak relieves them from the charge of sombre dulness. Their sides, rendered sterile by nature, have been scarred and defaced by human hands. Miserable buildings and masses of débris mark the spots at which the earth has been compelled to disgorge her wealth of

tin; while great blocks of granite, strewn over the entire surface of the ground, render the appearance of the country still more inhospitable, desolate, and neglected. On the slope of one of these hills, and within a walk of the sea-coast, is situated a house which, as long as it stands, must ever be interesting from its association with a great historical name.

Godolphin Hall, once the ancestral home of the old Cornish family of Godolphin, is now a farm-house; yet it retains in its old and inglorious age many signs of its former greatness. As is usual when we contemplate the decay of any human creation, the mind is apt to adopt the work of reconstruction. The palaces of the Cæsars may shelter shepherds, but whoever looks at them, though he beholds their ignoble and everyday use, will connect them with persons and events which have long since passed away. The dead man, as if reluctant to strip himself of all his associations with humanity, seems still to clutch at these products of his genius and labour, by forcibly capturing the moral and imaginative parts of our nature. It is impossible to look at Godolphin Hall without some such reflections. Everything about it speaks in unmistakable language of past generations, and the fine trees, the old gardens, the fish-ponds, the weather-stained walls marked here and there by lines which infallibly indicate days when roofs and rooms were more plentiful, lead our minds insensibly to repair the damage which many years of decay have inflicted. Once more the

porch is thronged, once more the broken horse-block at the door is sought for its proper use, once more the mullioned windows are filled with living faces; for one brief moment all are peopled by the spectral figures of the imagination.

But, in spite of the changes which have taken place in the old house, the banqueting-hall still remains intact. There is an interesting story attached to it. It is said that when Sidney Godolphin, as Lord Treasurer, used in the eighteenth century to pay occasional visits to Godolphin Hall, he found himself in this remote corner of England completely cut off from the world. In those days no public conveyance ran further west than Exeter. The Lord Treasurer directed that a messenger should at the end of every week collect the letters and papers accumulated at Exeter during the seven previous days and bring them to Godolphin Hall. The time at which the messenger was due at Godolphin Hall on his return from Exeter was known through the neighbourhood, and in expectation of it the gentlemen of the district were wont to assemble in the banqueting-hall to hear the news.[1] The circumstance is curiously illustrative of the social manners of the age.

Such was the home from which Sidney Godolphin sprang. Before proceeding with our narrative we

[1] Gilbert's *History of Cornwall*, ii. 59. It will save the necessity of frequent references to state once for all that the material for this chapter has been principally derived from such well-known authorities as Lysons, Camden, and Carew.

propose to touch very briefly upon the history of his family and of his immediate ancestors.

The origin of the Godolphin family is shrouded in an obscurity which we shall not attempt to penetrate. All that need be said of it in this place is that an ancient family called De Godolghan was settled in Cornwall under the Norman kings, that in 1400 it came to an end in the male line, that in 1504 John Godolphin—the first to spell his name in that way—was high sheriff of the county of Cornwall, and that his grandson, Sir William, several times represented the same county in Parliament. Sir William was a soldier as well as a politician, and a soldier too who, according to Carew, beautified his fame at the expense of his face. His scars lost him no friends, and the following quaint epitaph in Finchley Churchyard probably attests the esteem of some devoted follower who had shared his perils by land and by sea, and who had seen him hack his foes, and be hacked in return by them, on the plains of Picardy :

> Godolphin his race to rest hath run,
> Where grace affords felicity.
> His death is gone, his life hath wone
> Eternal perpetuity.
> Tho' William his corps here dead doth lye
> Barnes' faith in him shall never dye.[1]

Sir William Godolphin died in 1575, and, as he left no issue, his nephew Francis succeeded to the family property.

[1] Additional MSS. 28071, f. 7, British Museum.

The estate which Francis Godolphin inherited was one of the richest in Cornwall. It had not always belonged to the Godolphins, but it had been the seat of an important family from time immemorial. Ancient records speak of the castle of Godolphin, situated upon the property, as of great antiquity ; but its glory had, at a very early period of history, almost entirely passed away. In the reign of Edward IV. it was in a state of dilapidation ; a century later it was in ruins. Traces still existed, indeed, of the ditch which in early times surrounded it, but many of the stones of the edifice had disappeared, probably removed for the purpose of building other and humbler dwellings in the neighbourhood. At what time the transformation occurred which converted the crumbling remains of Godolphin Castle into a comfortable hall, celebrated even among the hospitable homes of Cornwall for its plenty and good cheer, we have no precise means of ascertaining. Suffice it to say that by the end of the sixteenth century the reputation of Godolphin Hall was established for a bountiful but unpretentious hospitality.

Nor can we explain with any greater accuracy the manner in which the Godolphins became possessed of an estate which appears to have conferred upon them its name. In the reign of Henry VI. the property belonged to the Arundels, who sold it to a person called Stephens. Stephens held the lands subject to a quaint but vexatious form of tenure. Once a year the steward of the manor of Peransand came to

Godolphin, boldly entered the hall, jumped upon the table, and there stamped or bounced with his feet or club. When this eccentric behaviour had collected the household about him, he addressed its assembled members in the following words : 'Oh yes, oh yes, oh yes, I am the reeve of the manor of Lambourne in Peransand, come here to demand the old rent, duties, and customs due to the lords of the said manor by the lords of Godolphin.' When this proclamation had been thrice repeated there were brought to him two shillings and eightpence in rent, a quart of strong beer, a loaf of wheaten bread worth sixpence, and a cheese of the same value. The relief must have been great when this noisy rent-collector, having tasted and approved of the victuals, and pocketed the two shillings and eightpence, retired to Lambourne to pay to his master the fruits of his estate. Centuries have brought us low rents, foreign competition, and agricultural distress ; there is compensation in the circumstance that they have also removed those stewards who, in the collection of rents, added insult to a disagreeable duty by stamping and bouncing on the tenant's table.

The estates which Francis Godolphin inherited were large ; by the favour of the Crown they became still larger, for Elizabeth made over to him the lease, and with it the military command, of the islands of Scilly. Scattered like a handful of dust in an ocean, which from the shores of America to the shores of Britain meets nothing to break its violence, the islands

form a crumbling rampart against the encroachments of the Atlantic, and compose a territory which few men would covet from any special advantages to be derived from their resources. Nor did their possession at first bring to Sir Francis Godolphin any great addition of wealth. Arts and industries, which at a later period rendered them valuable, were at that time unknown. Communication with the mainland, even now occasionally difficult, was then sometimes impossible, and always precarious, and its inefficiency formed an insurmountable obstruction to the easy intercourse which encourages trade.

But though the productive worth of the Scilly Islands was small, their geographical position rendered them, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, of the highest military importance. They were bulwarks against invasion, they were sentinels to guard the great high road between England and Ireland. To the Scillies ships fled for shelter from an enemy, and from the scarcely less dreaded storms of the tempestuous Atlantic. At the Scillies they touched to refit, or to supply themselves with stores, or waited patiently till contrary winds changed into propitious gales. Thus, while the Scilly Islands protected the commerce of England, they to a certain extent blocked up the entrance to the Irish Channel—a matter of great importance when England was not mistress of the seas, when Spanish squadrons were constantly crawling about our shores, and when Ireland, in chronic rebellion, was a harbourage for

Spanish soldiers. No one would have been entrusted with the command of a post so important but a man of established reputation. No man of established reputation could hold it long without increasing his own influence. When, therefore, Francis Godolphin became governor of the Scilly Islands, and commandant of the fort of St. Mary, he received a great accession to his political power, if not at first to his fortune.

Sir Francis Godolphin—for Queen Elizabeth honoured him with knighthood—was an able and energetic man, and contributed largely to the wealth and reputation of his family. His marriage with the daughter of Sir John Killigrew of Arwenack, whose old manor-house is still known to all who are familiar with Falmouth, strengthened his social position in the county, and increased by another link the proverbial cousinship which at that time was said to exist between Cornish families. Francis Godolphin was a thoroughly Cornish man, and remained one to the end of his life. His ancestors had earned a name in France as soldiers; his posterity were to make themselves famous at court or in Parliament; but Sir Francis rose to greatness in his own county and on his own estate. Circumstances, indeed, rendered a career in his native county more possible to him than either to those who preceded him or to those who followed him. During the period at which the power of Spain was at its height the exposed position of the southern seaboard of England was very favourable

to the development of great men in certain localities. The queen and her ministers required leaders in the maritime counties whom they could trust as soldiers and on whom they could rely as counsellors. There was, moreover, work to be done of sufficient importance to satisfy the ambition of men who would otherwise have sought a career elsewhere. Thus for many years the south-western counties of England produced a class of men which they have never produced since. Of this class Sir Francis Godolphin was an example. He was at once a soldier and a statesman, and played both parts with credit and distinction.

It was, however, as a country gentleman that Sir Francis was best known and most celebrated. Residing among a people whose social virtues we are told would have satisfied the demands of the severest moralist, who were liberal without being extravagant, who were on terms of amity among themselves, who were hospitable but prudent, balancing profits against expenses, and who, last but not least, were blessed with wives who cared not for dress, he was a pattern gentleman in a society which itself deserved to be the pattern of the world. Carew, whose survey of Cornwall is so well known, is an unimpeachable witness to Godolphin's merits. 'Zeal in religion,' says Carew, 'uprightness in justice, providence in government, and plentiful housekeeping, have given him a very great and reverent reputation in his country.'

But Sir Francis Godolphin was something more

than a perfect model of what was requisite in a Cornish squire. If the morals of his neighbours were benefited by the spectacle of his justice and uprightness, their pockets were infinitely enriched by the methods which he invented for the improvement of their estates. The wealth of the Cornish landowners consisted chiefly in tin. To produce the ore easily, to work it cheaply, to sell it dearly, was to them as to all producers a matter of the first importance. But they neither worked it cheaply nor sold it well. From the moment of production to the moment of realisation the process was one of perpetual friction and of perpetual loss. Many as were their excellent qualities, the landlords of Cornwall did not evince in the sixteenth century any extraordinary aptitude for the amelioration of their lands. Their predecessors the Phœnicians would probably have blushed at their ignorance, and have developed with far greater success the resources of the soil. Much of the material from the mines which was really of great value was thrown aside as useless, while the miners worked barely four hours a day, spending their spare time in playing at quoits or ninepins. Nor was this waste and indolence redeemed by the skill of the landowner as salesman. The merchants who rode down from London to purchase the tin came laden with tales that were calculated to impose on the rustic credulity of the Cornish gentry. Foreign wars they said were imminent, invasions of the Cornish coast certain, tin was at a discount in London and could not be sold—

a dozen fables were invented and circulated to cheapen the article which they intended to purchase. The first bargain struck usually fixed the price of tin for the season.

The genius of Sir Francis was too lofty to be bound by the rude ideas which were in vogue with his neighbours. A system of production and sale which was at once clumsy and extravagant was certain never to secure his sanction. He discarded the old wives' tales, which tempted landowners to dig in places mysteriously revealed, as mischievous impositions. He declined to be guided by prophetic dreams, or to believe that the young girls who usually dreamt them were discoverers almost equal to Hawkins or Drake, or were, in short, anything but wilful impostors or sickly visionaries. Steady determination and good sense rapidly did more to develop the Cornish mines than all the dreams dreamt by all the women and children since the Conquest. Never did knowledge and science win a more golden triumph over superstition. The Godolphin mines grew yearly in wealth, the men employed increased yearly in number, the revenue derived waxed yearly in value, and huge mountains of refuse were converted into small mountains of gold. The successful projects of Godolphin added 10,000*l.* to the public revenue. Nearly sixty years after the death of Sir Francis his reputation as a mineralogist had not been forgotten, and in a petition to Richard Cromwell for recovering the drowned and deserted mines of Mendip his

authority is quoted along with that of the famous Lord Chancellor Bacon.[1]

But unfortunately it was impossible for Sir Francis Godolphin to apply his time and his talents exclusively to an attempt to develop the material resources of himself and his neighbours. The days of Queen Elizabeth were not days in which men could devote the leisure of a peaceful life to the entire pursuit either of wealth, amusement, or benevolence. Peace, happiness, goodwill among nations, however much enjoined by the maxims of religion, had more than two centuries and a half to wait before they became the practical creed of any school of politicians. The sword was the sole arbiter of the age, and settled equally both domestic and foreign politics. The rumours of war which the tin-merchant scattered hither and thither as he jogged through the narrow and tortuous Cornish lanes were rendered highly probable by the circumstances of the time. Strife in some shape was the normal condition of the people. Europe of the sixteenth century was a bubbling caldron of international commotions and civil discords. The laws of mutual obligation between nation and nation were no less unsettled than the principles of internal government. Disturbances rent the surface of inchoate society in a manner similar to the convulsions which agitated the face of the earth before her crust had hardened and her features had settled into their present rigid and stony outline. The Englishman who

[1] *Seventh Report of Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts*, p. 82.

witnessed the Spanish Armada recollected also within three years the execution or assassination of three princes, and a most sanguinary civil war in the country nearest the English frontier. His national liberties were insecure, the very wealth which he had accumulated with toil might be violently snatched from him by a foreign invader. To protect himself against these mighty risks he had nothing to depend upon but his own vigilance and courage, and thus the personal obligation of defence was strong within him. In such an age every man is to some extent a soldier, and every gentleman in the position of Sir Francis, if he intends to preserve his influence, is bound to be a leader. As might therefore be expected, we find that the avocations of Sir Francis involved him in warlike quite as much as in peaceful projects. He occupied one of the highest military posts in the county—not, indeed, the very highest, for the lord-lieutenancy had been conferred on Sir Walter Raleigh—but he was deputy-lieutenant, with the governorship of the Scilly Islands, and the command of perhaps the finest regiment in the west, consisting of 1,200 men armed with pikes, muskets, and calivers.

Sir Francis Godolphin carried into his military profession the spirit of improvement which was so strong a characteristic of his nature. His genius seemed to touch ruin and neglect with a magic wand wherever he came across them. In the Scilly Islands he found the fortress of St. Mary decayed and its

garrison reduced. His energy repaired the defects of the one, and his solicitations induced the Government to swell the numbers of the other. He constructed, moreover, a fortress which taste and science combined to render at the same time a secure stronghold and a commodious dwelling; while money judiciously employed in the improvement of the islands increased in process of years his private revenue. The gallant manner in which the Scilly Islands held out for the Crown under Sir John Granville, during the parliamentary wars of the next century, testifies to the strength of the defences which Godolphin erected.

Sir Francis was a brave soldier, but there was one enemy whom he dreaded. He feared the power of Spain as he probably feared nothing else upon earth. In this he only shared the feelings of his fellow-countrymen. Whatever precautions he took, whatever preparations he made, were all directed against the Spaniards. The Spanish power had become a frightful bugbear to the English people, which the misfortunes of the great Armada had done something, but not everything, to dispel. While the strength of Spain was yet unbroken, the Inquisition and its abominable tortures were terrible possibilities to a nation which had fresh in its recollection the barbarous persecutions of the Low Countries. No wonder that nations trembled and statesmen paled before this hideous phantom of religious madness. The frustration of Spanish aggression

formed the centre of Godolphin's military policy. The grand invasions, the new invincible armadas which were always on the point of coming but never came, gave his thoughts and pen constant employment; but though the Spaniards did not again send a flotilla which could threaten the national existence, they despatched smaller expeditions, which in their nature were rather piratical than military, with the object of harassing the English coasts and of terrifying the people. With one of these Sir Francis had an engagement. The action occurred on July 23, 1595. Though taken unawares, it is quite clear that he had expected an attack, as on July 10 he had written to Sir Robert Cecil that 'the gathering of the Spaniards seems as a cloud that is about to fall.'[1] The words, though used as a figure, turned out to be absolutely descriptive of what happened. The attack did take place as he predicted, and came literally out of a cloud, as on the morning of the 23rd, when the sun had chased away the fog, four Spanish galleys were observed standing in for the coast. As so often occurs when events long foreseen and prepared for at length arrive, everything went wrong. The deputy-lieutenant was not on the spot, the *posse comitatus* could not be called out; and the natural courage of the hardy Cornish men, whose aptitude for hedge-fighting Lord Clarendon at a later date so much eulogised, deserted them.

[1] Hatfield MSS. Sir Francis Godolphin to Cecil, dated Godolphin, July 10, 1595.

Strangely enough the old Cornish rhyme was fulfilled to the letter :

> There shall be landed on the rock of Merlin,
> Men that shall burn Paul's church, Penzance, and Newlin.

The enemy rapidly made themselves masters of the position. Farms, villages, and churches were in a blaze, and a county which had it in its power to raise or resist an army was left to the mercy of a few marauders. Sir Francis happened by chance to be riding, when the news reached him that the Spaniards were devastating the county. He at once repaired to the spot. He found his soldiers panic-stricken, and their courage absolutely paralysed. With a few men he courageously disputed the streets of Penzance, till, deserted by his followers, and having very nearly lost his life, he was compelled to retreat and wait for reinforcements from Plymouth. But the enemy had no intention of allowing Sir Francis to punish them for their audacity or to retrieve his own honour. They departed as expeditiously as they came, wafted from the shore by a fortunate change of wind, 'as if,' to use the words of the chronicler of the story, 'God had it in purpose to preserve them His rods for a longer time.'

During the rest of his life Sir Francis Godolphin regarded the Spaniards with implacable hostility and with augmented fear. He was unable to recognise that even then the power of Spain was waning, that its natural decay scarcely required the acceleration of external agencies, that an attack which he conjectured

sprang from the exuberant strength of the nation was but a spasm of an expiring struggle. The picture of a fresh Spanish invasion was always before his eyes. He urged upon the Council of State the necessity of strengthening still further the fortress of Scilly, and even went so far as to advise the fortification of Milford Haven, that the Spaniards might be 'disappointed of convenient stable-room for their wooden horses.'[1] Nor was his restless and vigorous mind satisfied with planning the destruction of the Spaniards. The Irish wars attracted his attention, and induced him to submit his reflections on the subject to the Council of State. On October 8, 1601, he wrote to Cecil from Tavistock saying that he had framed 'a project touching the wars in Ireland.'[2] The project was never seriously canvassed, as Godolphin's old foes the Spaniards took a step which rendered it entirely abortive. They landed a force at Kinsale, a measure which, to use Godolphin's own language, 'will require a speedier and rounder kind of proceeding.'

The precise date of Sir Francis's death is not known. The last letter which he wrote to Sir Robert Cecil, dated February 14, 1604, was probably written a very short time before he died—at all events, after this time we hear no more of him, and his son Sir William reigned in his stead. Sir Francis was a man fertile in resource, of great energy

[1] Hatfield MSS. Sir Francis Godolphin to Cecil, August 13, 1599.
[2] Hatfield MSS. Sir Francis Godolphin to Cecil, October 8, 1601.

of character, and one whose friendships with such contemporaries as Raleigh, Cecil, and Carew, prove him to have been on an intellectual equality with the most illustrious men in the land.

Of this second Sir William, the grandfather of the Lord Treasurer, we do not gather much information. No friendly Carew appears to record his triumphs or to excuse his defeats. No uncouth Barnes sings a requiem over his grave, or builds 'the lofty rhyme' to his memory. His own letters to Cecil are short and fragmentary, and do little more than notify to us that he corresponded familiarly with one of the most powerful men in England. He has passed along the high road of history, and his footsteps have scarcely left a trace. We know, however, enough to affirm that he was neither a degenerate son of his father, nor an unworthy ancestor for a great English minister. We know that Sir William was engaged in the Irish wars under Essex, and that he so far distinguished himself in them as to receive the honour of knighthood. We know that his participation in these wars was entirely owing to his spirit of enterprise, for the letter is still extant at Hatfield in which he attempts to arrange with Cecil that he may be ordered to attend Lord Essex's person lest a voluntary absence from Scilly should prejudice his interests there.[1] We know, too, from the same interesting sources that some years later,

[1] Hatfield MSS. Sir William Godolphin, written in his father's lifetime, to the Earl of Essex, November 22, 1598.

in 1606, he was employed by the Government on an embassy to Paris. Of the precise object of this embassy we are, however, ignorant. Two things alone are apparent from it. First, that Sir William was on very familiar terms with Cecil; secondly, that his private means were inadequate to defray the expenses of a mission, and that Cecil generously assisted him.[1] We know, too, that Sir William Godolphin was also member of Parliament for the county of Cornwall. If we are to believe Cobbett's 'Parliamentary History,' he was a member at the opening of James I.'s first Parliament. According, however, to a more authentic record,[2] he was not returned to the House of Commons till October 1605. Whether, therefore, he heard James's first speech—probably the most extraordinary ever addressed by a sovereign to his people, in which the king laboriously sought to prove that he succeeded to the throne of England by right divine, when he lectured bishops, statesmen, and judges with equal severity in an address studded with Latin quotations, and embellished with allusions to David and the Philistines, Bellona and Astræa, Paul and Apollos, Rehoboam

[1] Hatfield MSS. Sir William Godolphin to Cecil, Westminster, June 10, 1606. 'Had not your honourable care prevented my necessity, I must have misspent this afternoon in trying my credit amongst the merchants as I did the morning'; and further on he says that he is ambitious of some 'borrowed bravery' to supply his other defects, but cannot press Cecil to adventure with him more than the value of his poor estate.

[2] Return to an order of the House of Commons: Members of Parliament, 1878.

and Ezekias—or whether he shared the fate of those unlucky members of the House of Commons whom an insolent doorkeeper drove from the door of the Upper House with the exclamation, 'Goodmen Burgesses, you come not here,' or whether he was not then in Parliament at all, we cannot precisely say, and we may perhaps be pardoned for declining to decide. All that can be declared with certainty is that Sir William sat in King James I.'s first Parliament, but that it is not recorded that he took any active part in its proceedings. He died in the year 1613.

Sir William Godolphin left four children. Francis, the eldest, succeeded to the property, and was the father of Sidney Godolphin, who became Lord Treasurer. Sidney, Sir William's second son, was celebrated as a minor poet, and was killed at the beginning of the Civil War; while William, the third son, died in 1638, distinguished for nothing that we know of, but commemorated by an epitaph[1] placed in Bruton Church by his brothers and sister. The name of the daughter, the *mœstissima soror* of the epitaph, was Penelope. In an unobtrusive way she probably had some considerable share in building her nephew's fortune, for she connected him with a house both powerful and wealthy. Penelope married Sir Charles Berkeley, and became the mother of that Sir Charles Berkeley who was created by Charles II. Lord Berkeley of Rathdowne, Viscount Fitzhardinge, and finally Earl of Falmouth. By the terms of the patent

[1] Additional MSS. 28071, f. 7, British Museum.

Penelope's husband, Sir Charles Berkeley, was made heir to the Fitzhardinge title of her son, and thus Penelope Godolphin lived to be Lady Fitzhardinge. The value of this alliance must have been great to the Godolphins, when the Restoration placed Charles II. on the throne, and when Sidney's first cousin Charles became first favourite, not only of the king, but also of the Duke of York.

Francis Godolphin, the Lord Treasurer's father, seems to have been one of those men who do what they ought to do, but who do no more. He fought for the king, but before the king's death he compounded with the Parliament.[1] He did not evince that inveteracy in the royal cause which induced one of his family to risk all in the defence of Scilly, and engaged another in the campaign which terminated so disastrously at Worcester.[2] The dauntless and devoted resolution in the field which displayed itself so conspicuously among the followers of Charles I. formed no feature in the character of Sir Francis Godolphin. Yet he did not desert the son of the fallen monarch, and is reported to have sent sums of money to support the prince in his exile. He was certainly trusted by the king on his restoration, for, besides the honour of knighthood, there was conferred upon him the custody of the State prisoners Vane and Ireton.[3] We should surmise, from the little which

[1] Journals of the House of Commons, January 5, 1646.

[2] Whitelock's *Memorials*, p. 476, October 1650.

[3] *Calendar of State Papers: Domestic*, 1661–1662, p. 169. Mr. Secretary Nicholas to Sir Francis Godolphin, December 5, 1661.

we really know of him, that he was a man not without family ambition, but desirous to advance its interests by more secure methods than by engaging deeply in the perilous politics of the age. He was highly esteemed by his neighbours, and was generally a man of sterling worth rather than of any intellectual superiority, and of prudence rather than sagacity. At an early age he was chosen member of Parliament for St. Ive's, and continued to sit in the House of Commons for various constituencies, till he was finally ejected by the famous resolution of 1643, levelled against those members who had deserted the service of the House and were in the king's quarters.

Francis Godolphin married Dorothy, daughter of Sir Charles Berkeley, of Yarlington, sister of the future Lord Berkeley of Stratton. Thus Sidney Godolphin was closely connected with both branches of the great Berkeley family. With the Berkeleys of Stratton he appears to have been on very intimate terms. In early days he was a constant inmate of Berkeley House, which, standing upon the site of the present Devonshire House, was, in the reign of Charles II., one of the most splendid private residences in London. No doubt the connection was of the highest importance to his future success. Sir Francis Godolphin died in 1667. As we proceed with Sidney's life, we shall again have to recur to the circumstance.

Sidney Godolphin, the brother of Sir Francis, alone of Sir William's three sons has attained any

historical reputation, and he deserves a short notice here, if only to distinguish him from his nephew, with whom he is so often confused. Of small body, of sharp wit, of excellent judgment, with considerable knowledge of foreign countries, and with a good post at court, Sidney Godolphin became intimate at an early age with many of his most illustrious contemporaries. He was equally the friend of Clarendon, of Falkland, of Waller, and of Hobbes. In spite, however, of the many excellent qualities which ensured him the esteem of the world, his character was remarkable for its caprice, and his temper was tinctured with melancholy. A little wind or rain would divert him from a short journey. A little air in the face would cause him to turn his horse's head and ride home. Such were the whims of his character. Subsequent events proved that they were only whims, and that he was deficient neither in vigour of body nor mind. He was for many years a member of the House of Commons. Three times did Helston return him as its representative, and on at least two of these occasions he signally displayed his loyalty. In his second Parliament he espoused the cause of Strafford; in his last, the Long Parliament, he zealously supported the tottering cause of the king.

There is no absolute proof that Sidney Godolphin displayed any great parliamentary ability, but there are some indications which lead us to conjecture that as a member of the House of Commons he was more

active than his brother Sir Francis. The Godolphins were early out of favour with what Clarendon calls the 'violent party' in the Long Parliament, and it is natural to infer that the hostility which this party displayed against them was inflamed by something more than passive opposition. It was soon discovered that the Godolphins were not of those in whom the House could confide. They loved the idolatrous worship of the Anglican Church. They honoured the Upper Chamber, full though it was of 'rotten-hearted lords.' Such symptoms of malignancy received from Parliament an early mark of disapprobation. On December 3, 1641,[1] the House of Commons resolved to take into consideration some offensive words spoken by Mr. Godolphin. The words themselves are not disclosed in the resolution; nor does it appear that the House ever visited them with a penalty. That it was Sidney who offended seems likely, as on a later occasion he proved that the terrors of the House could not conquer his audacity. When the king at last desired all members of the House of Commons to withdraw from the Parliament at Westminster, then, and not till then, did Sidney relinquish his place in the House. As he retired he uttered a warning both bold and true: 'By a war,' he proclaimed, 'the Parliament would expose itself to unknown dangers; for when the cards are shuffled, no man knows what the game will be.'[2]

[1] Journals of the House of Commons.
[2] *Somers' Tracts*, vol. vi. p. 574.

But it is not as a politician or as a soldier that Sidney's fame, such as it is, has descended to posterity. It rests upon his poetry, and it is in regard to poetry that we think confusion principally exists between himself and his nephew. It is alleged that Sidney Godolphin, the Lord Treasurer, was a scribbler of verses. It may be so ; if it is, the Lord Treasurer only occupied himself in the same manner as nearly every one of his political contemporaries. It is, however, singular that, as far as we know, not a single specimen of his verse is extant. Sidney Godolphin the uncle, on the other hand, wrote poetry extensively, and his productions have most certainly been attributed in some instances to the nephew. For instance, the epitaph by Sidney Godolphin on Lady Rich at the end of Gauden's 'Funerals made Cordials,' in the Bodleian Library, is ascribed by the editor of Wood's 'Athenæ' to the Lord Treasurer. The book itself was, in fact, published in 1658, when Sidney Godolphin, the Lord Treasurer, was but nine years old. The epitaph is clearly, therefore, we should imagine, the work of the uncle. There is a similarity also between the presumed poetry of the Lord Treasurer and the acknowledged poetry of his uncle which lends colour to the hypothesis that the compositions of the one may have been mistaken for those of the other. Swift charges the Lord Treasurer in a somewhat offensive manner with scratching out songs in praise of his mistresses. The best productions of Sidney Godolphin the uncle are undoubtedly his

love-songs. Thus, no difference of theme marks difference of authorship, and mistaken identity is thereby rendered more possible. So great, indeed, is the confusion which universally exists between the two Sidney Godolphins, that in the absence of direct proof that the Lord Treasurer dabbled in verse of any sort, we should be inclined to question whether he ever wrote any at all. Of the poetic gifts of the uncle there can be no doubt, and we offer the following song as an example of his talent :

SONG.[1]

Or love me less, or love me more,
And play not with my liberty :
Either take all, or all restore ;
Bind me at least, or set me free !
Let me some nobler torture find,
Than of a doubtful wavering mind.
Take all my peace ! but you betray
Mine honour, too, this cruel way.

'Tis true that I have nurs'd before
That hope of which I now complain ;
And having little, sought no more,
Fearing to meet with your disdain.
The sparks of favour you did give,
I gently blew to make them live :
And yet have gain'd by all this care,
Nor rest in hope, nor in despair.

I see you wear that pitying smile,
Which you have still vouchsaf'd my smart,
Content thus cheaply to beguile
And entertain an harmless heart :

[1] Ellis's *Early English Poets*, vol. iii. p. 229. Other specimens of Sidney Godolphin's poetry are to be found in the British Museum. Additional MSS. 6917.

But I no longer can give way,
To hope which doth so little pay ;
And yet I dare no freedom owe,
Whilst you are kind, though but in show.

Then give me more, or give me less :
Do not disdain a mutual sense ;
Or your unpitying beauties dress
In their own free indifference !
But show not a severer eye,
Sooner to give me liberty ;
For I shall love the very scorn,
Which, for my sake, you do put on.

Sidney Godolphin is by the many now forgotten, or only remembered to be confounded with the great statesman his nephew. But no distance of years will ever quite subdue his light, nor will his name ever entirely perish from off the page of history, for three of his greatest contemporaries have combined to immortalise his memory. Clarendon has written a description of his appearance and character. Waller has collected his poems. Hobbes has written his epitaph :

Thou 'rt dead, Godolphin, who lov'dst reason true,
Justice and peace ; soldier, belov'd, adieu.[1]

He was killed at Chagford in 1643 during the Civil War, and his body rests beneath the chancel of the church of Okehampton in Devonshire.

[1] Wood's *Athenæ Oxonienses.*

## CHAPTER II.

### EARLY CORRESPONDENCE AND MARRIAGE.

Sidney Godolphin, the future Lord Treasurer, was born at Godolphin Hall in the summer of 1645, and was christened in the parish church of St. Breage on June 15 of that year. The village of St. Breage is adjacent to Godolphin Hall, and but a short walk from its gates. The church is connected with the Godolphin family by the most sacred associations. Here the children of the family were christened, here its dead were buried. Here Sidney Godolphin, prostrate with sorrow, laid the young wife to rest whom Evelyn declared to be incomparable among women.

We might, were we so inclined, snatch at the announcement of Sidney Godolphin's baptism to moralise on the inscrutability of the ways of Providence, and the impotence of man to forecast the future. At the moment of Sidney's birth the war between king and Parliament was at its height, and the condition of the royal cause was desperate. The fatal battle of Naseby was fought a month after his christening. The complete, absolute, and, as it then

appeared, final overthrow of both monarch and Anglican Church occurred at no distant date after it. Yet, at this supreme instant, there was lying in his cradle in a remote country-house in Cornwall, a child who was destined not only to see the Stuarts restored and again deposed, but to see a Dutch prince on the throne, and a German elector heir-presumptive to it; to be himself during three reigns one of the chief ministers of the Crown, and in a fourth the last but two of those great officers of State who, from the time of the Conquest to the death of Queen Anne, held the wand of Lord High Treasurer of England.

Sidney was the third son in a large family of brothers and sisters. Sixteen children in all blessed the union which bound Francis Godolphin to Dorothy Berkeley. Nine of these children died unmarried. Some of them probably never emerged from infancy. Thirteen were, however, still living when Lady Godolphin drew up her will in November 1668, for in this document she mentions by name six sons and seven daughters.[1] The names of the sons were William, Francis, Sidney, Henry, Charles, and Edward; those of the daughters, Elizabeth, Jael, Frances, Penelope, Margaret, Katharine, and Anne. All the sons, with the exception of Edward, became more or less distinguished in after life. Of the daughters, two made excellent marriages—Elizabeth to Sir Francis Northcote, and Jael to Mr. Edward Boscawen.

[1] Additional MSS. 28071, f. 3, British Museum.

Unfortunately we know nothing very definite as to the manner in which Sidney Godolphin spent his youth. It was said of him when he was a statesman that he had completely mastered classical learning.[1] Whether, however, he ever studied at Oxford or Cambridge we do not know.[2] His brother Henry worked his way from an Oxford fellowship to the provostship of Eton, and finally to the deanery of St. Paul's; but we are inclined to think that Sidney never attended either university, and that his classical proficiency must have been acquired elsewhere. On the whole, it seems probable that at a very early age, in fact when almost a boy, he joined King Charles II. on the continent.[3] If so, he was perhaps old enough to recollect at Paris much of that motley life of spurious royalty which Evelyn so well describes, and which was admirably calculated to tincture the fresh mind of a boy—a court brilliant with the false brilliancy which emanates from dowerless titles, rotten with that rottenness which is produced by intrigue incited by no higher motive than by malice and spite, crowded with statesmen without offices, peers and gentlemen without lands or fortune, all plotting, like Milton's Lucifer, to creep, crawl, or intrude into that happy paradise from which

[1] North's *Life of Lord Keeper Guilford.*

[2] It is stated in Cates's *Dictionary of General Biography* that Sidney Godolphin was educated at Oxford; but there is no authority which we know of for the statement; it is probably a mistake for the uncle, who, as we learn from Wood's *Athenæ Oxonienses*, was educated at Exeter College, Oxford.

[3] Dryden's *Satire to his Muse.* See Cooksey's *Life of Lord Somers.*

the fortunes of war had expelled them. From the littleness of the exile's life, he may have turned with a natural loathing to an exile's death, and beheld the body of a sober English gentleman, banished even in death from the resting-place of his family, as in life he had been banished from its halls, buried in a suburban cabbage-garden at Charenton. Such spectacles as these undoubtedly filled the minds of those who witnessed them with a horror of revolutionary changes, and had great influence in moulding the political character of the generation of Englishmen which immediately succeeded the Civil War.

Nothing, however, is really known of Sidney Godolphin till he appears as a page[1] in the court of Charles II., about the time when the Count de Grammont was dazzling society with his humour, when the intrigues of Lady Castlemaine were distracting the heart of the queen, and those of Miss Stuart arousing the fury of Lady Castlemaine ; when Miss Jennings, the most beautiful of court ladies, dressed as an orange-girl, was selling oranges at the door of the theatre, and when the foolish and ugly Lady Muskerry, at one time masquerading as a princess of Babylon, and at another exposing her shapeless figure to derision at the queen's ball at Tunbridge, was covering herself and her husband with ridicule. Such was the theatre of life upon which Sidney Godolphin first emerged. When in the future we criticise his character or condemn his

[1] *Calendar of State Papers*, 1664, April 7.

morality, it would be unjust to forget the nature of the society in which his early youth was passed.

Sidney Godolphin must have been about nineteen years old when we thus find him as a page to Charles II., embarked on those fortunes which were finally to land him in a position almost as splendid as has ever been attained by an English statesman. Like most young men when they go into the world for the first time, he did not at once sever his connection with his relations at home. A series of letters, unfortunately not a very great many of them, carry us over the next eleven years, when the chapter of his private life, such as it is, closes, and henceforward he becomes a public man whose actions can hardly be called entirely his own. As these letters are too few in number, and too fragmentary to enable us to combine them into a narrative, we think that a knowledge of Sidney's character, and of the habits of the family from which he sprang, may best be obtained by the publication of a few letters and extracts.

The home which Sidney had left was composed as yet of most of the family. His father and mother were both alive. His younger brothers were still boys, and most of his sisters unmarried. Under these circumstances it is not strange that many of the earlier letters are chiefly concerned with such purely personal matters as the marriages and education of the children. Nearly the first topic touched upon in the correspondence is one which, if things had gone as desired, might have had considerable

effect upon Sidney Godolphin's comfort in later life. In 1663 Sir Francis considered that it was time that his eldest son should marry, and he therefore wrote the following letter to the lady whom he had selected for his daughter-in-law :

'Madame,'[1] wrote Sir Francis, 'the fame of your person and fortune, extending itself towards the Mount (i.e. Godolphin Hall), has raised a presumption in me to offer my son to be listed by your favour amongst the most devoted to honour and serve you, on whom, at his return out of Italy, about two years since, his majesty was graciously pleased to confer the honour of baronet ; it will not become me to praise my son, but to praise God for his great blessing to me in him. I shall testify my esteem of your ladiship and him by the tender of putting into his hands on his marriage a thousand pounds a year maintenance, and the same thousand pounds a year for jointure, all let for 21 years to good tenants exactly for so much ; your ladiship need not doubt that I will settle upon him and his heirs all my lands of inheritance after myself, and mines of tin of greater yearly value. (I may speak it without vanity) I know no young man in England has more near kindred and friends at court, yet I must tell you he is no courtier. All the discouragement I can

[1] It may be as well to state here that nearly all the letters in the family correspondence are without the date of the year in which they were written; it is, however, generally easy to fix the date from allusions to current events, and where this has been done, the date has been inserted in brackets at the head of the letter.

give your ladiship is that he is very modest. If your ladiship will either do me the honour of a line, or any other way you please, by this bearer, my trusty servant, signify your favourable leave for my son to wait upon you. I will add wings to his ambition, and in the meantime beg your pardon for this bold intrusion.'[1]

Like most proposals of this kind when couched in writing, the letter had only been despatched after careful deliberation. Curiously enough, a rough draft of it is preserved with the copy of the letter itself. Sir Francis had occasion to make several alterations before it was completed entirely to his satisfaction. In the draft he assured his correspondent that the fame of her beauty knew no bounds but the ocean, in the letter that it extended merely to the confines of Godolphin Hall. The draft also asserted that the joint fortunes of himself and the lady to whom the proposals were made would, if united by means of a marriage with his son, be sufficient to support the dignity of a baron. This, too, was omitted. Fortunately for Sidney, the negotiations were unsuccessful, his brother died many years afterwards unmarried, and he himself succeeded late in life, and at a moment of great poverty, to the family estates.

The Godolphins do not at this period seem to have been very fortunate in matters relating to marriage. In 1665, apparently, one of Sidney's sisters became

[1] Additional MSS. 28052, f. 5, British Museum.

engaged to marry a Mr. Dryden. The marriage never took place, and we only mention the matter at all as circumstances which attended it throw a side light on Sidney Godolphin's character.

In preparation for the marriage Lady Godolphin desired to provide a trousseau for her daughter, and being herself in the country she confided this important duty to her son Sidney. Even at this early age, Sidney, the courtier and the Londoner, was clearly the man of business of the family. Charles II.'s description of him as a minister in later days was equally true of him in his youth. 'Godolphin,' said the great master of apothegms, 'is never in the way, and he is never out of it.' But on this occasion we think that there are signs that even Sidney's equanimity was at fault, and he writes to his mother almost with an air of impatience. 'Since I came home I have been in doubt whether I should have some [clothes] made up new, or endeavour to buy those of Mrs. Stuart which were sent her out of France just before the court went into mourning, and are now useless to her; and, therefore, more likely to be a good penniworth. Your messenger is extremely impatient, else for aught I know I would expect an answer of this before I determine this matter, as also whether you stay only for the wedding clothes, for there is a report (however it comes to pass, not having your authority) that there is a demur in the affair; if so, I would rather venture on Mr. Dryden's anger at Robin when he comes home, and his at

me here, than commit any more errors in this business.' . . .[1]

It is amusing to observe in this letter with what minuteness the future treasurer balances the risk of losing the price of a dress against the probabilities of a marriage. His mind from youth to age was essentially a bargaining and a balancing one, and he was as eager now to secure a good pennyworth for his father's money as in later days he was to obtain for the country the full value for the subsidies which were paid to foreign Powers.

The next letter which we shall quote hurries us from a family marriage to what is even still more eventful in all families—the death of its chief. On receiving the news of the death of Sir Francis Godolphin, Sidney wrote as follows—the person with whom he corresponded is not named, but the context clearly shows it was with Sir William Godolphin, his eldest brother :

'March 23 (1667).

'Yesterday morning Robin wak'd me with your letter, and the most deplorable news for all our family that it was possible for them to hear ; though I have all the affliction in the world which the loss of the best and kindest of fathers can cause in the heart of the most grateful child, yet it does not equal that which I feel when I reflect upon my dear mother's grief. I beseech God Almighty of his infinite goodness and compassion to send her, and all hers, that consolation

[1] Additional MSS. 28052, f. 31, British Museum.

which he alone is able to bestow ; as soon as I had got myself ready I went directly to the king, who being the tenderest natured man in (the world) seemed to be much concerned for the loss we had all received in my dear father, and made no scruple of promising me that his offices should be continued to you ; after which I went to my lord of Bath,[1] told him what I had done, and delivered him your letter, and desired that he would go to the king (without taking notice of me, and upon the information of your letter) to ask the king those offices for you, and receive his commands to my lord Arlington for the speedy preparing your warrants, which accordingly was done, and I think you need not doubt the having of either, my lord of Bath bid me remember his service to you and assure you of his kindness, and I must needs do him the rights to say that I never saw any man in my life more ready upon all occasions to do good offices to another than he has been for you therefore I think you would do very well upon this to write him a letter, and take notice to him of this matter from me, and pray don't take it ill that I pretend to advise you in this matter, you may be sure that I will never do it in anything, but when I know it is a thing fit for you to do, for no man living has more kindness and esteem for a brother than I have for you, and more because I am very well satisfied that you love me extremely, besides you are now to

[1] Lord Bath's name occurs constantly in the correspondence. He was the celebrated Sir John Granville, whose exploits during the parliamentary wars are so well known. He died in 1701.

consider that we are now to be a father to one another or at least that you are to be so to me, and as I am sure I shall always have the respect due to a parent for you, so I do confidently believe you will not want a father's tenderness for me. I am afraid the post will be gone so that I can now say no more to you, pray God of Heaven keep you.'[1]

The death of Sir Francis filled Sidney's mother, Lady Godolphin, with the deepest grief. A letter which she wrote to her sister-in-law, Lady Fitzhardinge, immediately after her husband's death testifies at once to her affection for her husband, and also to the fact that he was not on the best of terms with one of his nearest and most influential relations. 'As this dear person,' Lady Godolphin writes, 'was the worthiest husband and the tenderest father so he was the kindest brother that ever I knew, how far soever passion might have transported him when he writ last to you. . . . Sir Francis was taken off from the world without having opportunity of speaking one word about wife, children, or estate.'[2]

Pecuniarily Sidney gained little by his father's death. Sir Francis, after a full consideration of his debts, found himself unable to leave more to his children than 120*l.* a year to some, and to others only 40*l.* We are not told whether Sidney succeeded to the greater or the lesser portion.

[1] Additional MSS. 28052, f. 62, British Museum.
[2] Additional MSS. 28052, f. 51, British Museum.

Thus the patrimonial inheritance of Sidney Godolphin was small; but this circumstance did not induce him to despair of a project which he had already formed of entering Parliament. In April 1667 his brother reported to him that a vacancy might possibly occur before long in some borough in the west. This seat Sidney determined, if he could, to win. The ambition to enter the House of Commons was no new one; for two years earlier than the time we have now reached, evidently revolving the same idea in his mind, he wrote to his mother concerning the borough of St. Mawes, that he should think himself extremely happy if anything could be done for him in that quarter for love or money. But neither love nor money was sufficient to return Sidney to Parliament on that occasion, and, like many an aspiring politician of later times, he had to repress his ardour till the arrival of a more fitting opportunity. That this opportunity was afforded to him after a delay of only two years was a matter concerning which he might consider himself fortunate; for Sidney lived in an age when no legal limit was imposed on the duration of a Parliament, and a candidate who looked forward to the next general election had to be prepared to wait from youth to middle age. The Parliament which Sidney now attempted to enter had already sat for six years, and was destined to sit for eleven more before it was dissolved. Sidney wrote to Sir William as follows:

'April 8 (1667).

'I sit down with so many things in my head to say to you, that I fear I shall go near to forget something, but to be sure that it may not be my own business, I will begin with that which is concerning the burghership; if you remember, I spoke something of it to you before you went away; that which makes me now put you in mind of it is that my lord of Bath goes next week post to Plymouth, and I have fairly engaged him to use his utmost with my lord Arundell, and all the gentlemen of the country upon whom he has influence; now that which I desire of you is that you would endeavour to engage Mr. Boscawen, by yourself or by my brother Boscawen, and what other people of good interest you can easily make friends of, and then when you see my lord of Bath (as I imagine you will do, of course, before he comes out of the country) that you would confer with him of this matter, and let him know what you have been able to do towards the furtherance of it, because I believe it will be necessary for me he should be acquainted with what we have to trust to; and if you will be contented to take this trouble for me, I shall reckon myself pretty fair for the first vacancy, especially if the Parl: sit again while my lord of Bath is in the west, where I suppose he will be till very near Christmas; I intend to write often to his lordship of this business, so that you need not fear when you come to speak to him of it and find him

unprepared. . . .—I am my dear brother's most faithful

'SID GODOLPHIN.' [1]

The events of the summer of 1667 were such as to interrupt Sidney's peaceful aspirations after parliamentary fame. In June the Dutch fleet sailed up the Medway. Terror and confusion reigned supreme. The court prepared for immediate flight to Windsor. The citizens of London fled into the country. Plate and goods were removed from the vicinity of the river banks. The Dutch fleet dropped down to the mouth of the river with the next tide. Immediate measures of defence were, however, adopted. An army of 12,000 men was collected. Commissions were granted to officers, and it was held a mark of zeal for the king to apply for one. Sidney Godolphin from his post at court did what was most likely to advance him in the royal esteem ; he obtained a commission and became a cornet of horse, thus—like another great minister, the first Lord Chatham—offering an example of a cornet of horse who has subsequently become first minister of the Crown. Concerning the above events Sidney writes to his brother Sir William in the following fashion :—

'Sat. June 15 (1667).

'You must needs have heard something before this of the burning of some of our best ships in the

[1] Additional MSS. 28052, f. 49, British Museum.

river at Chatham by the Dutch fleet, we depending too much upon the french promises of peace and having nothing in readiness to oppose them ; in order to the preventing of the most frightful consequences of this misfortune the king intends to raise a land army, and I am resolved to take a cornet's place in my lord Sunderland's troop, but finding I shall not easily get money any other way to put myself in an equipage fit for it, I shall be forced to think of parting with the annuity which my dear father has left me, and if you think it may be more convenient for you to buy it of me than any other, propose your own conditions for I am sure what you do I shall think reasonable. All officers being ordered to repair to their commands upon this occasion, my lord of Bath parted from hence this morning, and I believe as soon as he comes into the country you will soon have some orders from him ; I have been such a beast as not to take my leave of him, but the truth of it is I could not easily do it, for from the time he was commanded to go till the time he was gone, I was not six hours in town, but however I can't pretend to excuse myself wholly to him, but hope to make amends by keeping a good correspondence with him while he is in the country, and this I hope if you see him, you will be kind enough to say to him for me ; pray let me hear from you as soon as you can, and if you have any good men about you that will be glad to ride in our troop they need only make haste hither to me, and bring every man a horse. Hats, coats, boots, and

arms they shall be provided with here, but the chief thing requisite is that they make haste.—I am, my dear brothers, 'S. G.

'P.S. My humble duty to my dear mother.' [1]

That Sidney's military enthusiasm was not encouraged by his family the following letter from himself makes clear, while it brings strongly to light the worldly wisdom of the writer :

'July 2.

'I hope my dear brother will excuse me that I have not sooner returned him my thanks for his money and his good council, both which I take as kindly as he intended them ; for the reasons which persuade me from parting with my annuity I refer you to my mothers letter, but for my place in the army as you call it, that is a matter so far advanced that there is now no declining of it if I had never so great a desire to be disengaged which I do assure you since my first offer of it I have not once had ; and yet I think I have pretty well considered all those reasons against it which your kindness has laid before me and some others, not but that (as you seem to apprehend this business) your reasons are extream good, for methinks your letter seems to expect a formal landing of an enemie, and coming at least to one battle for it, when I believe of the other side that there is no intention of any such thing, that there can nothing of the kind be feared but from

[1] Additional MSS. 28052, f. 59, British Museum.

the French whose ambassadors at Breda, and the Swedish ambassadors likewise, have positively told the Dutch that the king of Englands propositions were so reasonable that if they would not accept them they should think themselves at liberty to make peace without them, and when we have once peace with the French will have nothing to fear at land, and truly I do now believe we shall have it presently ; now granting this tis an even lay the troops now raised will be quite reduced, if they be not, my employment will not oblige me to be 3 [?] days in a month from the king, nor to quit that which I have near him already till His Majesty be pleased to bestow a better on me, which time I do confess I cannot imagine to be very far off, nor I am sure will not be the further for the readiness I have shewed to engage in this matter, but quite contrary I hope to receive benefit from it in these main pretentions, and as to what my mothers letter says that you thought it was beneath what I might well pretend to, I take it to be the thing that in all reason ought to do me the most good, for there is nothing better in the world than not to stand upon ones punctilios when the king's service once comes to press, and so much for my matters.'[1]

The active services of Sidney in the field were never required. His troop, indeed, was ordered to Harwich, which was threatened by the Dutch, but he

[1] Additional MSS. 28052, f. 55, British Museum.

was not at first with it. Riding to London from Lee, where his men were quartered, he met with an accident which temporarily disabled him. Here one episode in his life closes. His military career was at an end. It is true that before he actually took leave of the army, if we may call the levies by that name, his bruise had so far recovered as to enable him to rejoin his regiment, but he did so only with the intention of seeing it dissolved, and its dissolution was doubtless to him a source of unmitigated satisfaction.[1] Thus terminated a service for which he was unfitted both by character and disposition, and which he had only undertaken to ingratiate himself with his royal master at a moment when, to use the words of Clarendon, courtiers were professing that they would willingly serve the king if only in the offices of corporals or serjeants.

The danger of an invasion passed, Sidney's mind turned again to the more congenial career of politics. As the existence of this long Parliament drew itself out, death made gaps in the ranks of its original members. In 1665, Sir William Godolphin, Sidney's brother, had been returned as one of the two members for Helston in Cornwall, owing to the decease of Thomas Robinson. In 1668 Sir Peter Killigrew, the other member, also died, thus creating another vacancy in a borough which had always been

[1] Additional MSS. 28052, f. 53, British Museum. 'Our troop is there [Harwich], but my bruise does not yet suffer me to go a horseback, and recompenses the pain I felt by saving me a troublesome journey.'

remarkable for its fidelity to the Godolphins. Sir William at once communicated the interesting intelligence to his brother. The announcement did not come one instant too soon, as an opponent was already in the field.

Sidney replied as follows :

'Aug. 8 (1668).

'I have received your letter and find myself extremely obliged to you for the kindness and care you shew for my concerns, and for the timely intimation of this vacant burghership which I set my heart upon extremely, and if I can obtain it by your means will be a very great furtherance to my pretentions here ; indeed more than you can imagine or I can let you know conveniently ; after this I hope I shall not need to press you very much to use your utmost for the effecting of this matter ; to contribute what I can myself towards it I have acquainted my lord of Bath with the business who is extremely ready to give me his council and assistance ; he tells me that Mr. Evitley [?] has not long ago owed very particular obligations to him, and believes tis very possible that he may be able to prevail with him to wave his pretentions ; however he advises me by no means to press a speedy election nor to move for the writ upon August 10, but in case anybody else should, to take care with my lord keeper that it should be put into my hands which I think I can easily do. My lord of Bath's reason for gaining time is in case his letter to Mr. Evitley [?] should not have the effect

he imagines it will, that he may send [some] one down into the country to him to discourse particularly with him upon the business, and to tell him some things he says can't be so directly done by a letter; pray will you let me hear constantly from somebody or other while this matter is in agitation how it proceeds, and whether anything that I am able to do here may be of use, and thats all the trouble you shall have from me about it at this time. . . . I am extremely glad to hear that my mother is so well again; pray God continue her so, and my dear brothers kindness to his most affectionate S. G.

'P.S. I have asked the kings leave to stand for this place, and he seems desirous I should do so.'[1]

A few days later (August 20), writing from Althorpe, he again renews the subject of the election:

'My last letter from London will have told you that I am come hither where I received yours of the 12th just now, and am very glad to find by it that you see no impossibility of bringing this business to a pass. Before I came out of town I had got the Speakers order to the Clerk of the Crown for the writ, and left it to Mr. Bridgemans care to see it dispatched as soon as was possible, and sent to you, who promised me faithfully it should be done; I write to him now by my lady Hervey, who will be at London to-morrow night to quicken him a little; so that I hope you will have the writ with you very

[1] Additional MSS. 28052, f. 47, British Museum.

soon; I intend also to desire by this post that Mr. Treasurer would try what he can do with Mr. Grisley without naming you in the business, and as soon as I know who the other pretenders are which your letter speaks of, I will acquaint my lord of Bath with it, and I think you may be confident of what assistance his authority upon them will bring us. This matter being like to be determined in a short time one way or the other, I would wish with all my heart that there was no necessity of your going to Scylly at least till the election were passed (your own kindness and vigilance in this matter being what I chiefly depend on) and though I can't desire you to stay if it be any inconvenience to your own affairs, yet I may offer my service in case you do, to make your excuse to anybody you can desire. . . . I dont very well understand what you say of Robinson and G. Colling [?] but if it will be as I apprehend it, my opinion is that one enemy may do us more hurt than one friend can do us good, and so if you can be rid of both I think you will have made at least a saving bargain, but perhaps it mayn't be good to come to any extremities, you that are upon the place are the best judge of it.'[1]

On Michaelmas Day, September 29, he forwarded a letter, or, as it would probably be called now, ar address, to the town of Helston, setting forth, no doubt, the many particulars which qualified him to represent the borough in Parliament. That he was

[1] Additional MSS. 28052, f. 39, British Museum.

but slightly, if at all, known to the electors whom he was courting, the following letter will make apparent:

'With this,' he says to his brother, 'I send you enclosed and unsealed my letter to the town of Helston which I desire you would peruse and mend what you dont like in it, which you may do safely, and get one of my sisters to transcribe it, for I suppose nobody there knows their hand any more than mine. I have deferred my writing to you this week because I hoped every post to have sent you the writ which Mr. Treasurer has undertaken to get for me but not yet performed. I must now leave it wholly to his care, being myself to go to-morrow morning to Newmarket with the king who will not be in town again till the end of October. . . . I would fain hear that my mother is perfectly recovered.'[1]

From Audley End he writes on October 20: 'Since I came from London, I understand my friends have not solicited heartily enough for me to keep Sir P. K. (by the help of his acquaintance with my lord keepers secretary) from deceiving us of the writ; however, I hope there will be no other ill consequence arise from it but a little more trouble and pains; I have not yet heard from you concerning my letter to the town of Helston, though tis possible your answer stays for me at London where we shall be again I hope within three weeks at farthest. The King will be sometimes here and sometimes at New-

[1] Additional MSS. 28052, f. 41, British Museum.

market till the end of this month ; here is no kind of news but what we read in the gazette ; my lord of Bath who is yet at London, will be here next week, he had your excuse and your letter before we parted. Your excuse to the general shall be made as soon as we come to London, your sickness will make it very easy. Pray try what may be done at Helston. If I were apt to believe reports I ought not to be confident of success.' [1]

On October 26, Sidney Godolphin returned to town, and the first news he received was that he had been elected member of Parliament for Helston. The date of the return was officially made for October 15. But London was a very long way from Helston, and Audley End farther still, so that for eleven days Sidney's business had been satisfactorily concluded without his knowledge. How different from the present day, when the triumphant candidate flashes his victory half over the world at the very moment that the numbers of the poll are being declared!

'October 27 (1668).

'I came to town so late yesterday night, that I could not then tell you how sensible I was of the good success of our business at Helston. I intend to write to Dr. Sleeman [?] to thank him for his pains and vigilance in this matter, and to desire him to let me know constantly what things I can do to keep the good will of the town of Helston. For all the

[1] Additional MSS. 28052, f. 65, British Museum.

news and the secretaries papers that he talks of, those they shant fail of after I have had one weeks time here to look about me a little. I mean to write to them by this post, and to thank them as elegantly as I can for the kindness they have shewed me, and intend for the time to come to be very punctual in sending them such kind of intelligence from home, as I imagine they care for. . . . I think in one of your letters to me you took notice that my brother Frank has written an angry letter to you concerning my having the burghership. I confess if there were any right in the case, he ought to expect it before me, and I would certainly not have thought of it to his prejudice, if I had not known perfectly well that it will be of ten times more advantage to me than it could possibly have been to him. . . . I am sure if you were here I could easily make it very plain to you. He has never taken notice of it to me, nor I wont begin with him, because I would not rub an old sore, but if it must be meddled with I would do my endeavour to have it perfectly cured. . . . .'[1]

Thus Sidney was, at the age of twenty-three, a member of Parliament, with his foot upon the first rung of the ladder upon which he was to mount so high. It does not appear that, according to the fashion of modern elections, he ever addressed his constituents. He was not called on to offer a detailed explanation of Lord Clarendon's impeachment, he was not compelled to name the particular traitor who deserved

[1] Additional MSS. 28052, f. 63, British Museum.

death in consequence of the expedition of the Dutch fleet up the Medway, he was not obliged to answer inconvenient questions as to the extravagance of the court or the licence of its manners. The inquisitive elector, who now asks questions about everything, and alone knows the correct answers to all the questions he puts, was, fortunately for the politicians of the age, not then in existence.

The election of Sidney for Helston did not pass unchallenged, though no trace of a dispute in reference to it is to be found in the Journals of the House of Commons. Possibly the accusations against him were never formulated; as the following letter will show, they scarcely even ruffled the mind of the new member:

'Sat. morn. Oct. the last (1668).

'. . . It does not at all appear to me how the election may possibly be questioned, nor if it be, that it can do any hurt when a member of the House that was present offers to witness it a fair election. I did write a letter of thanks to the mayor at the same time.'[1]

Halcyon days indeed for members of Parliament when the testimony of a single member was considered sufficient to establish the validity of a disputed election.

The pleasure of Sidney in his return to Parliament did not come to him without alloy, for in the early

[1] Additional MSS. 28052, f. 69, British Museum.

winter of the same year he lost his mother. The death of Lady Godolphin must have been the cause of deep grief to Sidney, whose letters to his mother testify to his strong affection for her, as well as a serious misfortune to a large and young family. She was evidently a woman of most amiable disposition, and the terms which she was on with her children were frank, easy, and affectionate. The death of Sir Francis had left his numerous children to her sole charge, and the success which most of them met with in after life is the best proof of the careful manner in which she had trained them. Lady Godolphin's will, as has been already stated, is dated November 17, 1668, she being then sick in body but sound in mind. When she made it she was clearly at the point of death. How it came that her condition was not known to Sidney till after all was over is not easy to understand; but on December 3 he writes to his brother—doubtless Sir William Godolphin—that not having heard from his brother Frank for some time he is surprised to hear of his mother's death, not being aware that she was in any extremity. 'Pray God Almighty comfort you and my dear sisters (for whom I feel even more than for myself).'[1] The death of his mother probably added but little to Sidney's income, as after a legacy of 80*l.* to her eldest son and 5*l.* apiece to her married daughters, Lady Northcote and Mrs. Edward Boscawen, the residue of her fortune

[1] Additional MSS. 28052, f. 35, British Museum.

she divided in equal portions among her ten other children.[1]

A break of several years here occurs in the correspondence, and it is not till 1675 that Sidney's next letter appears in the family collection. This letter too has reference to a death. His brother Frank, who in earlier years had shown himself somewhat jealous of the return to Parliament of his younger brother Sidney for Helston in preference to himself, had been selected by Lord Berkeley to accompany him as secretary to Ireland on his appointment to the Lord-Lieutenancy of that country. Lord Berkeley had departed from London with no inconsiderable pomp. 'My lord Berkeley,' writes Charles Godolphin on April 12, 1670, 'was waited on yesterday by at least four score coaches with six horses, my coz Nell [was] not up soon enough to make one in that solemn cavalcade, though she had her share of the magnificent treat which was prepared for him at St. Albans.'[2] With such a chief it is not surprising that the secretary should have contracted habits of display, and another family correspondent describes, probably during Lord Essex's viceroyalty, the departure of Frank Godolphin from London in his own coach with six hired horses, 'and a very fine perfuming pot a present for my lady Essex.'[3] Frank Godolphin served both under Lord

[1] Additional MSS. 28071, f. 3, British Museum.
[2] Additional MSS. 28052, f. 75, British Museum.
[3] Additional MSS. 28052, f. 13, British Museum.

Berkeley and his successor Lord Essex with distinction. In August 1775, upon his return to Dublin after the transaction of some important business in London, he unfortunately fell ill. Sidney Godolphin despatched his brother Charles to take care of him, and Charles, on August 13, wrote to Sidney from Dublin informing him that Frank was dead, and requesting Sidney to forward the news to the rest of the family.

This letter[1] is a curious mixture of grief, of painstaking description of the nature of the disease, of his own desire now that he is in Dublin to obtain some employment from his brother's patron, Lord Essex, and of the pecuniary arrangements of his brother. Like Lady Godolphin, Frank had carefully divided his small fortune among his brothers and sisters. To his younger brothers he left 100*l.* each; to his unmarried sisters 300*l.* each, with the exception 'only of mistress Anne,' who was to have 1,000*l.* Sidney, when he received the letter from Dublin, was residing at Berkeley House; while his sister, Mrs. Boscawen, was also in town. He thus breaks the news to the family in Cornwall:

'Aug. 19 (1675).

'I am very sorry never to write but when it is to tell you ill news, but I choose rather to do it myself than give my sister Boscawen that trouble, who needs no addition to her grief in the conditions he is in, yet I hope she will bear it so well as not to receive

[1] Additional MSS. 28052, f. 67, British Museum.

any prejudice by it. The story of my poor brothers death, and the circumstances you will best see by my brother Charles' letter to me, which I here send you enclosed. The greatest consolation I can collect from his account of it is that it pleased God to give him his senses very perfectly many days together before he died, though during his sickness he was very subject to extravagances and fits of raving. I think it fell out well in many respects that my brother Charles went over and should be very glad if my lord Lieutenant has consideration enough of him and of his brothers memory, to give him some employment that might in some measure recompense the uncomfortable task as is fallen upon him. I think of writing to his excellency to night to see if I am able to say anything that may induce him to it. I pray God send you and my dear sisters all necessary consolation. I would say something particularly to Mrs. Anne because I fancy she will be more troubled because of the distinction that my brothers kindness has made in her behalf, but as she is goodnatured as anybody can be, so I am sure she is very religious, and too wise not to know one must not take anything too much to heart, but that submitting with patience to God Almighty's will is the duty of every good Christian, and is best shown in the greatest afflictions. I hope you will both forgive me this sermon and be always kind to your most faithful and obedient

'S. GODOLPHIN.'[1]

[1] Additional MSS. 28052, British Museum.

With Frank's death the private correspondence of Sidney Godolphin with his family may be said to close. Other letters do appear at intervals addressed to his various relations, but there is no connection one with the other, and little contained in them to display the turn of his mind or his character. With this correspondence too, and the little that is related by Evelyn of Sidney Godolphin's marriage, ends all we know of his domestic life; and that it may not be necessary to return to the subject again, it will be as well to mention here, only a little out of place, the circumstances of his marriage to Miss Margaret Blague, and the calamity which attended it.

Among all the beauties who shone at court in the early part of the reign of Charles II., there was none who, according to Evelyn, could vie with Miss Margaret Blague. Her mind was in every respect equal to her person, and in a court renowned for licentiousness she was an example of virtue and religion. It is extraordinary that so great an admirer of the fair sex as the Count de Grammont never mentions her name in the whole course of his memoirs. Perhaps her youth saved her from his notice, or it is possible that the rigidity of her conduct may have repelled the admiration of the witty and amorous Frenchman, as tinctured with the moroseness of puritanism. De Grammont required food for scandal, and food for scandal about Miss Margaret Blague there was absolutely none. Her sister Henrietta, like herself a lady of the court, De Grammont treats with

his usual raillery. If, according to De Grammont, she was not quite so bad as some ladies about her, it was only because the temptation was not thrown in her way. He describes her as foolish, frivolous, and, what in his estimation was worse, plain. No greater contrast can possibly be found than between the characters of Evelyn's Margaret, and De Grammont's Henrietta, Blague. While the one was practising a religion which in its austerity would have more than fulfilled the requirements of a strict conventual life, the other was flaunting about at masques and balls, vainly attempting to entangle the affections of the Marquis de Brisacier, a person with as few attractions as herself.

Henrietta's faults were her own. Margaret's virtues were those of her family. Their ancestors had been both pious and loyal. Their great-grandfather, in the reign of Henry VIII., had, indeed, very nearly lost his life as a martyr to his religion. Though a favourite of the king, so great a favourite, indeed, that Henry used to call him his 'pig,' he was thrown into Newgate under the statute of the Six Articles, and sentenced to be burnt. Representations on his behalf were made to the king, who ordered the Lord Chancellor with his own hand to draw out his pardon and to order his liberation. As soon as Blague appeared in the royal presence, 'Ah, my pig!' the king exclaimed to him. 'Yea,' replied Blague, 'if your Majesty had not been better to me than your bishops were, your pig would have

been roasted ere this time.' The pig-face must have been hereditary, for a century later much the same title was bestowed, though, perhaps, not in affection, on Henrietta Blague by her supposed lover Brisacier. Brisacier had spoken of the fairness of her skin, and of her eyes as 'marcassins.' The lady's French was insufficient to translate the compliment, and she sought for an explanation from a friend. To her rage and mortification, she was informed that Brisacier had compared her eyes to those of a sucking-pig. Sidney Godolphin appears to have in some respects resembled the family into which he married, as by a curious coincidence he became known in later days by the name of 'Bacon-face.'

Miss Blague's father distinguished himself during the civil wars, and like other royalists, at their conclusion, suffered the fate of the vanquished. His daughter Margaret was fortunate enough to obtain the protection of the Duchess of Richmond, and was by her carried abroad and educated in Paris. At the Restoration she returned to England, and was, when old enough, appointed one of the ladies of the court to the Duchess of York, and at her death, in 1671, to the queen. It was doubtless at court that Godolphin first made the acquaintance with Miss Blague which led to their betrothal.

The engagement of Sidney Godolphin to Miss Blague was destined to be a long one. There is every reason to believe that it already existed in 1670. One of Sidney's sisters, writing from London

to Godolphin Hall in that year, observes that she has seen Mistress Blague, 'and made discoveries that have increased our familiarity, but you are not to make much reply to this or imagine by it a marriage, for I dont think 'tis so yet, and these are ill times to set up with upon their foundation. I pray God send better.'[1] During their protracted courtship the lovers indulged in the language which has in all ages been used by persons in their circumstances. He talked of going abroad, she of retiring to a religious retreat, and both eagerly desired to exchange a lot, promising and almost splendid, for the seclusion of some rustic home—

> A country cottage near a crystal flood,
> A winding valley, and a lofty wood—

where, remote from the entanglements of the world,[2] and free from the duties which they were each so eminently fitted to perform, they could lead a soft and inglorious life in their own society. After five years the time of trial and suspense ended. The marriage took place on May 16, 1675. Sidney Godolphin was then Groom of the Bedchamber to the king, and Miss Blague was twenty-three years old. The income which Godolphin derived from his employment at court seems to have amounted at that time to about 1,000*l.* a year.[3]

[1] Additional MSS. 28052, f. 13, British Museum.

[2] 'There was nothing which they both did breathe after more than to have settled somewhere remote in the country from all entanglements of the world.'—Evelyn's *Mrs. Godolphin.*

[3] *Calendar of State Papers*, 1703 (about July 20).

It is a curious feature both of the times and of the characters of Sidney Godolphin and his wife, that though married they did not actually live as husband and wife till, to use the words of Evelyn, 'they had made their families and equipage complete.' In April 1676, we find them in possession of a house, or rather an apartment with the conveniences of a house, which their friend Evelyn had prepared for them, on the banks of the Thames, in the neighbourhood of Scotland Yard. Here they took up their abode, and here Sidney Godolphin continued to cultivate a friendship for Evelyn, which terminated only at his death, and which was extended afterwards to his descendants.[1]

But the years of Godolphin's happiness as a married man were soon at an end ; and at an end, too, were all those little expeditions to Lambeth to buy marble chimney-pieces, or to Blackwall to purchase Indian curiosities, all those little charities which Evelyn loved to commemorate, all that pleasant social intercourse with the husband and wife which made him regard himself almost as their father. On September 3, 1678, Evelyn had gone up to London —probably from Sayes Court—to dine with the Godolphins. His first intelligence on his arrival was that Mrs. Godolphin had been confined. For a few days all went well ; but on the fifth alarming symptoms

[1] Additional MSS. 15949, British Museum. John Evelyn (Evelyn's grandson) writes, September 15, 1712 : 'God has pleased to put an end to the languishing state of our never enough to be lamented friend and benefactor.'

became manifest. Sidney, in his distress, at once cast himself for sympathy upon his friend Evelyn. The messenger found Evelyn in church, and placed the following note in his hand: 'My poor wife is fallen very ill of a fever, with lightness in her head. You know Who says the prayer of the faithful shall save the sick. I humbly beg your charitable prayer for this poor creature and your distracted servant.' Prayers as well as other remedies were equally ineffectual. Her death and the misery of Sidney are inimitably described by Evelyn: 'She died in the twenty-sixth year of her age, to the inexpressible affliction of her dear husband and all her relations, but of none in the world more than of myself, who lost the most excellent and inestimable friend that ever lived. Never was a more virtuous and inviolable friendship; never a more religious, discreet, and admirable creature, beloved of all, admired of all, for all possible perfections of her sex. She is gone to receive the reward of her signal charity and all other her Christian graces, too blessed a creature to converse with mortals, fitted as she was by a most holy life to be received into the mansions above. She was for wit, beauty, good-nature, fidelity, discretion, and all accomplishments the most incomparable person. How shall I ever repay the obligations to her for the infinite good offices she did my soul by so oft engaging me to make religion the terms and tie of the friendship there was between us! She was the best wife, the best mistress, the best friend

that ever husband had. But it is not here that I pretend to give her character, having designed to consecrate her worthy life to posterity.

'Her husband, struck with unspeakable affliction, fell down as dead. The king himself and all the court expressed their sorrow. To the poor and miserable her loss was irreparable, for there was no degree but had some obligation to her memory. So careful and provident was she to be prepared for all possible accidents, that (as if she foresaw her end) she received the heavenly viaticum but the Sunday before, after a most solemn recollection. She put all her domestic concerns into the most solemn order, and left a letter directed to her husband to be opened in case she died in childbed, in which, with the most pathetic and endearing expressions of a most loyal and virtuous wife, she begs his kindness to her memory might be continued by his care and esteem of those she left behind even to her domestic servants, to the meanest of which she left considerable legacies, as well as to the poor. It was now seven years since she was maid-of-honour to the queen, that she regarded me as a father, a brother, and, what is more, a friend. We often prayed, visited the sick and miserable, received, read, discoursed, and communicated in all holy offices together. She was most dear to my wife and affectionate to my children. But she is gone! This only is my comfort, that she is happy in Christ, and I shall shortly behold her again. She desired

to be buried in the dormitory of his family, near 300 miles from all her other friends. So afflicted was her husband at this severe loss, that the entire care of her funeral was committed to me. Having closed the eyes and dropt a tear upon the cheek of my dear departed friend, lovely even in death, I caused her corpse to be embalmed and wrapt in lead, a plate of brass soldered thereon, with an inscription, and other circumstances due to her worth, with as much diligence and care as my grieved heart would permit me. I then retired home for two days, which were spent in solitude and sad reflections.'[1]

Sidney's grief for his wife was inexpressible. His misery would hardly permit him to watch her sufferings, and her death, to use again the words of Evelyn, left him drowned in tears and prostrate at the mercy-seat.

It is needless to say that the last wishes of such a wife were not neglected by a husband so afflicted as Sidney Godolphin. Her body was carried to Godolphin Hall. Thirty relations and servants followed the hearse. Sir William Godolphin, the head of her husband's family, formed one of the mournful band; other brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law were also there. Her husband alone was absent, overwhelming grief rendering him incapable of physical fatigue.

Nor in the course of years was it destined, as it so often is, that the grave should reunite those who

[1] Evelyn's *Diary*, vol. ii. p. 447; also his *Life of Mrs. Godolphin.*

have been separated for half a lifetime. Poverty had separated Sidney from his wife in youth ; rank, fame, honour, and great reputation divided them after death ; for while the body of Margaret Blague reposes under the church at St. Breage, that of Godolphin has found a more splendid resting-place amidst the sacred dust of the greatest men of the nation.

## CHAPTER III.

### EARLY POLITICAL LIFE: 1670–1685.

With the loss of his wife Sidney Godolphin's family history ends. We must now turn back a few years to take up the thread of his political career.

It is somewhat strange, and adds greatly to the perplexity of our task, that a statesman of such great reputation as Sidney Godolphin should have left behind him so very few memorials of his early life; most men who have achieved greatness by their own exertions are apt, from various motives, to dwell upon the period of their aspirations. To some the vulgar contrast between poverty and affluence may be the subject of agreeable reflections. But to all, even the most refined, it must be pleasant to scan the devious track which led from insignificance to importance, and to regard calmly and with sensations of triumph the obstructions which nothing but the rarest fortitude could have surmounted. Thus, autobiographies, journals, diaries, and papers arranged for printing after death are common enough; for even if a great man is indifferent to the praise of posterity, he is anxious, at all events, that his actions should not be misrepresented when he is no

longer able to defend himself. But of Sidney Godolphin there are no such remains. He has bequeathed to those who have come after him nothing in the shape of justification, or of narrative, or of selected letters to add to our knowledge of him, or to vindicate his policy or his conduct.

Nor has the work which he was too indolent or too careless to perform for himself been performed by others. His fame inspired no contemporaneous writer to preserve, if he could do no more, those records of his career which must have been common during his life and for a short time after his death. Such information as is to be incidentally gleaned from historical sources is often absolutely misleading. Errors concerning him abound, and pursue him through every branch of literature. For instance, the references in the various editions of Pepys's memoirs to Mr. Godolphin, which are ascribed by the editors to Sidney, nearly in every case refer to William Godolphin, Lord Arlington's secretary, afterwards ambassador at Madrid. Even a work so authentic as the Journals of the House of Lords is not free from mistakes, as in the roll of the peers the Christian name of Sidney Godolphin's brother, Henry Godolphin, is on one occasion substituted for that of the Lord Treasurer.[1]

Thus the traces which Sidney Godolphin has left are few, faint, and uncertain. The reputation of which he was himself so careless has, not unnatu-

[1] Journals of the House of Lords, March 11, 1702.

rally, been uncared for by others. No unconscious action, the result of occupation or amusement, throws a casual and helpful light upon his history. Unlike most of his great contemporaries, he has transmitted no literary work by which we can judge of the character and fibre of his mind. Such speeches as he made are scarcely preserved. When he dropped into the grave a mighty silence fell upon his name and upon his past, and an obscurity which is almost impenetrable still defies the most painstaking inquiry into some of the most important matters of his life.

Unfortunately, the collection of family letters from which we have already quoted does nothing to supply the blank in Sidney Godolphin's history. His relations who visited London had something else to think of than the pursuits of their young kinsman, and confined themselves in their communications with those at home almost entirely to a narrative of their own adventures. They detailed all the news and wonders of the capital. Balls at Chelsea, fêtes at Mulberry Garden, quarrels worthy of the pen of St. Simon between the ladies of the court, were doubtless two centuries ago read with a zest rendered all the greater from contrast with the dulness of life in a secluded county. But it is impossible to believe that such gossip was the only or most welcome news which the post brought to the inmates of the grey old house, whose children had for several generations made Godolphin one of the most distinguished names in the west of England. The successes which led

Sidney step by step to the highest honours, which caused his star to grow gradually brighter, till a time arrived when that of his great ancestor Sir Francis paled in its light, could not have been achieved without the keen appreciation of those at home. Letters describing the dawn of his career must have been written, and were they existing still would tell us much which is now only matter of conjecture.

For many years, then, after his return to Parliament for Helston, little is known of Sidney's life. He probably remained an undistinguished, though not unimportant, member of the House of Commons. Scanty as are the parliamentary records of that age, they may still be trusted to mention the names of those who took a very prominent part in debate. Concerning Sidney Godolphin there is an absolute silence, which is the more singular, as when he first appears conspicuously in public life upon a diplomatic mission he was already undoubtedly a person of some consequence. Moreover, incidental observations in the family correspondence prove that Sidney, on occasions, took an active part in the proceedings of the House. In 1670 his brother Charles writes that a proviso moved by Sidney to a bill, the title of which he never mentions, was only lost by one vote. The very rareness of these remarks leads us to the inevitable conclusion that his ultimate success was not grounded on any early display of parliamentary talent. Like most of his contemporaries, he owed his start in life almost entirely to his address at court. He looked

for promotion to the king alone, and the king did not disappoint his expectations. In 1678 he was sent as envoy extraordinary to the Spanish Netherlands.

For several years the congress of Nimeguen had been vainly striving to restore the peace of Europe. For several years its efforts at pacification had resulted in disastrous failure. It had not only failed to restore the peace of Europe, but it had been utterly unable to establish harmony among its own members. Questions of etiquette and punctilio divided the plenipotentiaries. Trifles were magnified into matters of consequence. Who should pay the first visit of ceremony, when that visit should be returned, became points of as transcendent importance as the diplomatic business which had drawn the congress together. Nothing was done, and nothing, it seemed, could be done, in such a discordant assembly. It was in vain that Charles II., who really desired peace, urged his ambassador to press upon his colleagues the mischief of delay. 'My opinion is,' wrote Secretary Coventry to Sir William Temple, 'that if you were put to run from house to house, the king our master may sooner kill all his ambassadors than beget a peace.'[1] Such was the assembly with which Godolphin's mission now brought him into contact—not, indeed, as plenipotentiary, but as envoy extraordinary to the Duke of Villa-Hermosa, the Spanish governor of Flanders.

A few trips to the continent and back speedily

[1] Additional MSS. 25119, f. 53, British Museum. Sir Henry Coventry to Sir William Temple, August 1, 1676.

convinced Godolphin that peace was impossible. He was wrong. Peace was not only possible, but it was at hand; and its advent was predicted by Sir William Temple. The difference of opinion between Godolphin and Temple as to the probabilities of peace gave rise to a somewhat curious incident, and caused, at all events on Sir William Temple's side, a slight, though temporary, coolness. Godolphin jestingly, as it appears to us, declared to Temple, who was despatched to Nimeguen to conduct the negotiations, that if he secured a peace, he would move in the House of Commons that a statue should be erected in his honour. Temple's mission succeeded, and peace was concluded, but no motion was ever made for a statue. Temple somewhat peevishly, we think, complained bitterly of Godolphin's breach of faith, coupling the charge with a far more serious accusation. He alleged that he was never reimbursed for the private expenses which he had incurred on behalf of the public while he was minister, and laid the blame upon Godolphin when, at a later period, he became Chief Commissioner of the Treasury. The accusation is probably true—similar accusations were made at that time from all quarters, but the reproach, in so far as it is merited, must be borne by the age rather than by any particular statesman. The dispute between Godolphin and Temple, if it deserves the name, had no serious result. In the following year an attempt was made, upon Temple's advice, to establish the Privy Council as a new power in the constitution. He submitted Godolphin's name to the king as a suitable member of

the new board.[1] The king sanctioned the appointment, and in 1679 Godolphin became, if we may use the word, a member of the Government. In 1678 he had been made Master of the Robes to Charles II.; in 1679 he was nominated a commissioner of the Treasury.

When Godolphin became a minister of the Crown the affairs of the king and the country were at a crisis. The peace of England was threatened by a complication of difficulties, any one of which would have been of itself sufficient to excite alarm. The fancied discovery of a Catholic plot for the destruction of English liberty and religion had plunged the nation into most abject terror. The chief minister of the Crown was accused of conniving with the king to sell the interests of his fellow countrymen to a foreign potentate; an agitation was in existence for excluding the Duke of York from his birthright; the Parliament which had met in 1661, and which had served the king faithfully for seventeen years, had just been dissolved, and a new Parliament, composed to a great degree of zealots hostile to the royal prerogative, and inflamed with hatred against the Roman Catholics, was seated in its place at Westminster. Upon a government[2] experi-

[1] Burnet says that 'the new council was his (Temple's) work except the bringing in of the Lord Shaftesbury.'

[2] It is perhaps hardly necessary to explain that a government in the modern sense of the word had no existence in the seventeenth century. The chief executive power belonged exclusively to the king. I shall, however, continue to employ the designation, as it seems to me to describe better than any other word the position of those whose duty it was to serve and advise the king, as well as to manipulate parties.

mental in nature, and comprising every element of discord, devolved the duty of pacifying the people and of healing the dissensions which sprang from the violent religious and political passions of the age. A government such as was proposed by Temple could not succeed. It was an experiment and an anachronism, and it failed, as it was sure to fail. But its failure did not necessarily involve the fate of those who were its members, nor did it affect that of Godolphin. Governments might come and go, but Godolphin's credit continued to rise. The very difficulties of the situation only rendered his judgment and capacity the more conspicuous. In the midst of an agitation which was not only embarrassing but in some degree infectious, he evinced both moderation and good sense. He preserved his presence of mind when those around him were either swept away by the flood of public opinion, or thought it prudent to float with the stream. He condemned the religious excesses of the Protestants, but he determined to protect himself and the country against the future excesses of the Catholics. While, therefore, he opposed in the House of Commons the violent proceedings against the Papists, he combined with Lord Sunderland and the Duchess of Portsmouth to exclude the Duke of York from the throne.

The connection of Godolphin with Sunderland and the Duchess of Portsmouth was unfortunate for himself, if he cared to preserve a character for political purity. He could indeed hardly have entered a worse

school of politics, for, in an unprincipled age, his associates were notorious for a shameless destitution of morality. The Duchess of Portsmouth was mistress to the king, and a professed French *intrigante*, while no politician of the epoch of the Revolution has bequeathed to posterity so contemptible a reputation as Sunderland. Selfish, ambitious, adroit, and unscrupulous, he was a master of the art of intrigue and dissimulation; he made friends with all, and deceived all equally. It is perhaps one of the most remarkable facts about him that, in spite of the notorious falseness of his character, few statesmen of the age seem to have been so much trusted. How Godolphin secured the friendship of Sunderland we are not informed. His own abilities probably introduced him to one who was first a patron and a colleague, and afterwards an opponent. Sunderland was quick to recognise and employ useful talent wherever he found it, and it is not improbable that he may have thus been prompted to assist Godolphin in the public service as in later days he attempted to assist Swift. With such a master Godolphin could hardly become inspired with any high notion of political honour. Political honour, however, was not an attribute of the age so much as loud-mouthed professions of political principles. The corruption in which Sunderland wallowed stained even the virtuous patriotism of Algernon Sidney.

But political associates, like private friends, must be selected with care by men who have regard for their

own integrity and reputation. The alliance of Godolphin with Sunderland was hardly cemented before the truth of this aphorism made itself apparent, and Godolphin became involved in the insidious machinations of his colleague. The king's brother, the Duke of York, was his friend. Godolphin was induced not only to oppose him, which was perhaps proper, but he was persuaded to do so under the mask of friendship, which was treacherous and disgraceful.

At the period when Godolphin joined Sunderland, the condition of England was one which even the most hopeful could only regard with apprehension. The political horizon was unpromising and overcast. Bitter persecution threatened the Catholic religion, deadly hostility imperilled the succession of the Duke of York. Convulsions and calamities seemed impending over the nation, and the worldly eyes of many time-serving politicians scanned the heavens in search of signs and tokens which might assist them in forming a judgment which they never left to conscience. Such are the seasons in which men like Sunderland thrive. The storm, says a writer of the age, is the seedtime for the politician : and Sunderland was never backward in sowing his intrigues, and reaping the rank harvest of his cunningly laid schemes. The time appeared to him to be ripe for a master-stroke of policy. The Duke of York was in banishment at Brussels, the Catholic religion in England was on the verge of political extinction ; even Halifax, generally so reasonable and humane, was con-

templating a bill which would drive all Catholics into exile;[1] while Monmouth, the rival of the Duke of York, in the full tide of favour, commanded the king's army, monopolised his affections, and figured before the people as the champion of their religion, if not as the lineal heir to the throne.

Sunderland, with instinctive prevision, noted the signs of the times. It appeared to him that the old order of things was about to change, and he characteristically determined to change with it. He attached himself rapidly to the popular party, intrigued with Shaftesbury, and flung himself into hostility to James. That he was the friend of James, and desired in appearance to remain so, was to Sunderland a matter of the smallest importance. Deception was the method by which he worked; he preferred, while crushing, to deceive his victim, and James was perhaps of all men his most frequent dupe. James himself tells us that Sunderland was one of the specious friends whom he most dreaded, and that every fresh act of treachery administered to him a fresh shock of surprise. The credulity of James and the treachery of Sunderland are equally matters of history; but it is with pain that we must record that Godolphin also stooped to flatter James at Brussels with the semblance of friendship while he opposed him in England, and that he took advantage of that melancholy faculty of self-deception which perhaps more than anything

[1] James II., writing of the events of 1680, says that 'Halifax had long meditated this project.'

else led the unfortunate prince a few years later to his ruin.

The events which gradually, in the course of the years 1679 and 1680, unfolded to James the true sentiments of Sunderland and Godolphin towards himself are neither very clear nor altogether free from historical discrepancies. For the purposes of explanation, however, the leading features of the situation are sufficiently distinct. It is certain that in the summer of 1679 the Duke of York was in Brussels, that he had been sent there by the king because his presence in England was embarrassing, that from Brussels he persistently petitioned the king to permit him to return to London, and that for long the king as persistently refused to grant his request.

Such was the state of things when, towards the end of August or beginning of September, James unexpectedly received a secret message summoning him to England. The reasons which prompted Charles to change his resolution so frequently expressed of keeping James in banishment have been variously explained by different authorities. By some it is stated that a sudden indisposition of the king alarmed Essex and Halifax, who dreaded that in the event of his death Monmouth would succeed him; that Shaftesbury, their inveterate foe, would be Monmouth's minister; that under these circumstances their fortunes and perhaps their lives might be jeopardised, and who consequently thought that the best method of securing their own safety was

to induce Charles to recall his brother. By others, again, it is asserted that some members of the Council of State desired the co-operation of the duke in public matters, and hoped to earn his gratitude and goodwill by putting an end to his exile.

Both versions of history are probably true, but for the present purpose it is a matter of little importance which consideration at the time was most effective. It is certain, and it is enough to know, that the duke was recalled, and that the pretext assigned for recalling him is also beyond dispute. The king's health, it was pronounced, was in a bad state,[1] and James was commanded to return to his brother. The order was instantly obeyed. Leaving Brussels with a secrecy which reminds us of his last fatal flight from England, and crossing the Channel in a small boat in the teeth of a gale, James arrived absolutely unknown at Sir Allen Apsley's house in London. His first measure was to send for Hyde and Godolphin, a step which shows how implicitly he relied on their friendship. Hyde and Godolphin advised him to repair at once to the king at Windsor. The advice was good; it was probably the only friendly advice which he received at this time from Godolphin. James, when he reached Windsor, rapidly discovered that his presence at court was not wanted. Circumstances had changed; the king was better, he himself was regarded as an encumbrance. His own unpliant nature rendered the party in the council which might have

[1] Reresby in his *Memoirs* (p. 37) calls the king's illness pretended.

befriended him equally adverse, for the ministers who had counted upon his co-operation in gratitude for his recall speedily found out their mistake. Gratitude, indeed, was not at any time a feature in James's character, and certainly on this occasion there was no great reason for him to show it. He resolutely refused to comply with their wishes, and as a consequence his residence in London was soon found highly inconvenient. After some negotiations with the king, and a compromise effected in regard to Monmouth, he was again directed to quit the kingdom. In determining this matter the king chiefly took counsel with Essex, Halifax, Sunderland, Hyde, and Godolphin ; the most earnest in pressing for the banishment of James was Godolphin. That James should have continued to trust Godolphin after this act of opposition appears extraordinary, but so it was, and the scales of blindness still sealed his eyes.

James went back to Holland, and from Holland almost immediately returned to the mouth of the Thames, when he received the king's instructions to repair to Scotland. He remained in Scotland during the winter of 1679, till, in February 1680, obeying the command of his brother, he reappeared at court in London. He had scarcely been in London more than a few weeks before Shaftesbury indicted him as a popish recusant.

Again the duke's presence in England became a source of extreme embarrassment; again he had an opportunity of sifting his true friends from his false ;

again Godolphin appeared among his opponents—and now the time had at length come when the sentiments of Godolphin could no longer be concealed from James. In the autumn of 1679 Godolphin had energetically contended for the duke's banishment without apparently exciting the duke's suspicions. In the spring of 1680 he had acted as an intermediary between the king and the Duke of Monmouth, the hated rival of James; yet James, with native dulness, still failed to perceive that Godolphin was his enemy. In the summer of 1680 the opposition of Godolphin was unmistakable and avowed, he was an unconcealed exclusionist, and James recognised and denounced him as a foe.

James was highly, and not unnaturally, incensed at Godolphin's behaviour. To no other subject, with the exception of Sunderland, had he shown such condescension, and he bitterly resented conduct which, in the event of the king's death, was calculated to deprive him of the crown, and render him a miserable outcast, the object of the charity and compassion of foreign princes. But, great as was his wrath, perhaps his amazement was even greater. He could hardly conceive the cause which could prompt Godolphin to become his enemy. He could only explain a circumstance so unintelligible by attributing it to the evil influence of his brother-in-law.[1] From the beginning to the end of his life James never could understand how he came to have enemies. It never occurred to

[1] Clarke s *James II.* p.. 595 (note 3).

him to turn his eye upon himself, and to ask whether the qualities which distinguished him were likely either to endear him to his subjects or to command the confidence of his adherents.

The cabal between Sunderland, Godolphin, and the Duchess of Portsmouth continued to flourish with more or less vigour until the end of the reign of Charles II.,[1] and of its various aims it pursued for two years none more pertinaciously than the exclusion of the Duke of York from the throne. It may seem strange that three persons who were intimately connected with the court, and who could certainly boast of no high political principle, should have attached themselves with such determination to a cause, which was not only the popular cause, but the cause also of popular liberty. The slightest examination of the characters of the three partners of the cabal at once elucidates the difficulty. First in rank, as she was highest in the favour of Charles, was the Duchess of Portsmouth; but her position, splendid and degraded, was as insecure as it was magnificent, and might at any moment, on the death of the king, or a violent change of government, become one of the gravest peril. The exclusionist leaders saw her danger and appreciated the advantage which it gave them over her. They threatened, unless she agreed to support them, to indict her as a

[1] Barillon writes to Lewis XIV., February 19, 1685: 'Milord Sunderland, Madame de Portsmouth, et Milord Godolfin possédoient seuls toute l'autorité auprès de feu Roi d'Angleterre.'

common nuisance, and to throw her, as they expressed it, into the lump of their grievances. If she sided with them, they would not, they said, forget her in their reforms. Such threats and promises were sufficient to intimidate or lure a stronger character, and she joined with the enemies of the Duke of York. The motive which governed her was fear.

Sunderland was actuated by other sentiments. He was ambitious and greedy, and principally ambitious because he was greedy. It was not in his nature to adhere to either persons or principles, but to regard both persons and principles as the speculator regards investments and stocks, to be relinquished when they cease to be remunerative, and to be taken up when they are likely to pay. Thus Sunderland was never to be found intentionally on the losing side. Whenever Sunderland's side lost, we always find that he had already in some way commenced to cross over to the other. Sunderland deserted James because he thought that James was deserted by fortune. The motive which governed him was simply self-interest.

Of Godolphin's motives we are inclined to take another and somewhat more favourable view. It is true perhaps that he, like Sunderland, would not have deserted James, unless James had apparently been deserted by fortune; but he did not, we believe, abandon him on that account alone. His character was of that temperate sort which recoils from extremes in whichever direction they go. The exercise

of arbitrary and unreasonable authority on the part of the ruler was as abhorrent to his mind as insubordination and rebellion on the part of the people. Such excesses were precursors of future strife, and he shrank from their possibility as from the shadow of a great evil to come. Nor could he have doubted that James, if he ever became king, combining as he did to a very great degree religious fanaticism with the constitutional obstinacy of a narrow mind, was certain to bring about the misfortune he most dreaded. Already the duke's religious fervour had permitted, or rather encouraged, him to display a nature which a more worldly disposition would have taught him to disguise. Already he had proclaimed that he was prepared to sacrifice every hope of an earthly crown for the reward of a spiritual one—in other words, that he was determined to coerce the people to his will, be the cost what it might. Such declarations alarmed men less habitually cautious than Godolphin. It was therefore natural that he should wish to evade a danger which appeared to him to be a serious one, and he made the attempt. The policy which he adopted thus was in every respect consistent with our knowledge of his character. He joined the cabal. He threw himself into hostility to James. He inexorably opposed his pretensions, he vehemently demanded that he should be driven into exile. 'If the Duke of York does not leave at present,' said Godolphin on one occasion, 'he will be obliged

to go in a week, and the king with him.'[1] Unlike the policy of Sunderland or the Duchess of Portsmouth, that of Godolphin was, we believe, guided neither by fear, nor by ambition, but by prudence.

The breach of Godolphin with James had a result no less important than inevitable. It led him to pay his court to the Prince of Orange. Godolphin was already personally acquainted with the prince. His mission to the Low Countries during the negotiations of Nimeguen had enabled the two men, who, had it been possible to raise the veil of futurity, would have recognised each other as future king and minister, to make personal estimates of each other's characters. When Mrs. Godolphin died, William disclosed an interest in the bereavement of the husband which testified to his respect, if not to his regard;[2] and now, after several years, and after their paths had widely diverged, the circumstances of the time brought them once more into communication. As Godolphin drifted from his old partisanship with James, he was of necessity drawn to the only other centre of gravitation which existed in English politics, and which, like the other pole of the magnet, attracted whatever atoms the cause of James repelled.

Thus Sidney Godolphin was soon regarded as one of the chief adherents of the Prince of Orange, and his credit rapidly rose with the party of his

[1] *Dalrymple's Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 351.

[2] Clarendon and Rochester Correspondence. Prince of Orange to Hyde, October 1678.

adoption. Sydney, afterwards Lord Romney, a father of the Revolution, but who is described by Swift, with his customary asperity, as a vicious, illiterate old rake, pronounced him one of the only honest men in a court which was filled with rogues. William sought his opinion as readily as he did that of Temple, and that on matters of the greatest importance. To Godolphin no less than to Temple did he turn for advice, in 1681, on the important question as to whether he should visit England, and it was the advice of Godolphin rather than of Temple which he followed. How high Godolphin's credit stood with the Prince of Orange this circumstance alone is sufficient to prove;[1] how low with the Duke of York may be judged from the Duke's own words: 'Nothing,' he exclaimed to Lawrence Hyde, 'would go well till Godolphin and all the rotten sheep at the end of the gallery were turned out.'[2]

But Godolphin's adhesion to William and his hostility to James were not destined upon this occasion to endure. In 1682 the cabal abandoned its efforts to exclude James from the throne. The manner in which this change of policy was effected was as sudden as it was contemptible. So long as it appeared that the king would consent to the exclusion of the Duke of York, Sunderland displayed the most exemplary spirit of self-sacrificing

[1] *Dalrymple's Memoirs*, vol. i. app. to pt. 1, b. 1, p. 70.

[2] Clarendon and Rochester Correspondence. Duke of York to Hyde, December 14, 1680.

patriotism. He submitted to expulsion from office, and frequented the clubs and coffee-houses of the popular party. James, who regarded political clubs with the same eye as the modern Tory once regarded the Birmingham caucus, and who declared that by their means the popular party transferred the government not only from the king to the Parliament, but from the Parliament itself to the Sun Tavern and King's Head Club,[1] could not have been more openly defied. But when it became obvious that the cause of the Duke of York was to be triumphant, the Duchess of Portsmouth used her influence to recall the Duke, and to obtain for Sunderland the office of Secretary of State. Thus ended an intrigue characteristic of the time, but still more characteristic of the various persons concerned in it. All breaches were apparently healed, amity was re-established; the Duchess of Portsmouth, Sunderland, and Godolphin exchanged the society of Shaftesbury for that of Hyde; and a tone of greater reserve and smaller encouragement was adopted in the correspondence with the Prince of Orange.

In 1684 Godolphin was appointed for the first time to an office which, on various occasions, he was afterwards destined to fill with distinction. He became First Commissioner of the Treasury. Rochester, the head of the Treasury board, was accused of malversation, and was unable to clear himself of the charge. Even in the days of Charles II.

[1] Clarke's *James II.*, p. 619.

such an offence committed by such an officer could not be condoned, and it was necessary to remove him from his post. He was made President of the Council, and Godolphin succeeded him at the Treasury. But before this event took place Godolphin had already ceased to be a member of the Treasury board, as, in April 1684, he had, upon the resignation of Sir Leoline Jenkins, accepted the seals of Secretary of State. The appointment, it was said, had not been a happy one. Godolphin was accused of being taciturn and mysterious, while his colleague Sunderland was an inveterate schemer. Both secretaries were what Lord Keeper North calls court artists.[1] It is stated that from the moment of Godolphin's accession to the office of Secretary of State, the affairs of the king began to suffer ; and the blame is laid on Godolphin. The charge is evidently unjust, as it is scarcely possible that between the months of April and August 1684—the period of Godolphin's short tenure of the office of Secretary of State—he could have inflicted much injury on the public service.

The reconstruction of the ministry in 1684, by which Godolphin was advanced to the office of Chief Commissioner of the Treasury, is an event of great magnitude in his life. For two other reasons it also deserves our attention : in the first place, it marks a decided progress in the political morality of the nation ; and in the second, it is an excellent illus-

[1] *Life of Lord Keeper Guilford*, p. 230.

tration of the spirit of intrigue which characterised the age, and which was particularly displayed in the conduct of the small body of men with whom Sidney Godolphin habitually acted. The offence of Rochester would have been insufficient to compel the king to remove him from his office had not the moral sense of the people been wakened, and the moral condemnation of the people would have been insufficient to expel him from it without the assistance of party intrigues. The two influences combined caused Rochester's overthrow and Godolphin's elevation.

To us in the reign of Queen Victoria no apology would be required for removing a minister who had been accused of an abominable offence, and who had completely failed to clear himself. It would be enough by way of explanation to say that Rochester had abused a sacred trust, and that Godolphin was already esteemed one of the most rising ministers of the day. But in the time of Charles II. the case was different. Only a few years before, the king had closed the public exchequer, and the unhappy bankers, who were his chief creditors, had been flagrantly robbed of their money. The statesman who conceived this alarming and dishonest expedient for settling the king's debts was made a peer ; the statesman who executed it was appointed Lord Treasurer. With such an example of almost fraudulent corruption before our eyes, there seems absolutely no reason why Rochester should, as far as the king at least was concerned, have suffered deprivation

of office for his official misconduct had the royal judgment been left free and unfettered. Nor can the manner of his removal from office be for a moment accepted as a mark of the king's displeasure. Rochester, when he committed the offence with which he was charged, was First Commissioner of the Treasury; it was resolved to make him President of the Council. The Presidency of the Council was higher in dignity, though it was certainly less in influence than that of First Commissioner of the Treasury. Halifax correctly stated the position when he jocosely observed that his old adversary had been kicked upstairs. Never, we may safely assert, did a powerful king exhibit his displeasure in a manner so inadequate and so senseless. He obliged Rochester to change from one office of honour to another: from an office in which he could squander much, into an office in which he could squander less. The action of the king was prompted by no sense of abhorrence, either of crime, or of neglect amounting to crime. It was the unwilling recognition of the judgment of the public conscience and of the power of public opinion.

But, as we have said, another influence was at work to favour the success of Godolphin: the intrigues of faction expressed in the manœuvrings of Sunderland and the cabal which practically governed England. Rochester had always been devoted to the Duke of York. Sunderland and Godolphin had never lost touch of Monmouth and

the anti-Catholic party. The recall of the Duke of York, after the dissolution of the Oxford Parliament in 1681, had skinned over the breach which had existed between Sunderland's cabal and the adherents of James; a certain alliance or fusion had taken place between them, but it was a settlement which was more apparent than real.[1] Quietly and unostentatiously both tried to obtain advantages over the other. Rochester did his best to bring his friends into power;[2] the cabal was equally determined that its members should not be left in the cold. Thus Godolphin had owed his appointment of Secretary of State to the representations of the Duchess of Portsmouth; and it was probably to influence of a similar kind, joined to the inveterate hostility of Halifax for Rochester, that his further removal from the Secretaryship of State to the First Commissionership of the Treasury may be ascribed. The immediate circumstances which occasioned the fall of Rochester and the rise of Godolphin were not clear even to so well informed a contemporary as Reresby. Reresby hesitatingly assigned them to the agency of Halifax, though he said that he did not understand how the finger of Halifax could prevail against the shoulder of the Duke of York.[3] The finger of Halifax was certainly of itself insufficient to produce so great a change. It was only one of the disturbing influences upon which Sunderland, with his usual adroitness,

[1] *Barillon's Letters to Lewis XIV.*, February 19, 1685.
[2] *Reresby's Memoirs*, 1684.
[3] *Ibid.*, Aug. 27, 1684.

reckoned to promote his own ends ; a momentary display of fondness on the part of Charles for Monmouth was another ; and Sunderland seized the propitious moment when public opinion was in his favour to push the tottering supporter of the Duke of York from his insecure position, and establish his friend and follower in one of the most important offices in England.

Godolphin was at Windsor when Charles acquainted him with his design of removing Rochester from the Treasury, and of conferring the office on Godolphin himself ; and he directed Godolphin to undertake the unpleasant task of informing the man whom he was supplanting of this resolution. He wrote as follows :—

'Aug. 1684, Hampton Court, Tues. 5 a'clock.

'Not coming to London to-night as I intended, when I saw you last, I would not defer to tell you that last night the king called me into his closet, and told me, that having lately known you had been some time uneasy enough with your employment in the Treasury, and desirous to leave it, upon any good occasion, and having a great deal of consideration for your services to him, with much more to this purpose, that he was resolved to make you president of the Council, and at the same time to put me into your place at the Treasury with many gracious expressions of the trust and confidence he had in me, he knew very well he said that the place

I was in was of much more advantage and that I must not, nor should not be a loser by this change, but that he thought it of absolute necessity for his service; and could not think of putting anybody but me into this place. I told him that if I were at liberty to consider either my advantage or my inclination, I should most earnestly beg of his Majesty that he would be pleased to let me continue where I was, but in the manner that he spoke of this thing, that I had nothing to do but submit myself entirely to his pleasure with abundance of thanks for his favourable opinion of me which I should still endeavour to deserve to the best of my power. I went this morning to the Duke to acquaint him with what the king had said to me. My lord Sunderland was by the Duke to-day, the king had told him the same thing yesterday morning in the drawing-room, and that he had spoken to the king upon it, that the Lord of Clarendon might be secretary of state, but that he found the king was very averse to it, yet he desired my lord of Sunderland to speak to the king of it too, and he said he had already desired the same of the duchess of Portsmouth who had promised him to do it; I did not know this when the king spoke to me, but he seemed to me very much at a loss for somebody to put into my place, and said he could not like any one that had been named to him, or that he could think of himself; he asked me my opinion of Mr. Trumbull, and of Mr. Blathwaite, and bade me name such as came into

my thoughts, I did not presume to put him in mind of anybody, but those that have the honour to serve him abroad at this time as my lord Preston, Mr. Chudleigh, and Mr. Skelton; he seemed not to like any of these, but to incline more to Mr. Blathwaite, than any other that had been named to him, and so this matter remained to-day at noon when I left Windsor; my lord Sunderland made me promise him to come back again to-night, being in great pain till he sees the king has fixed upon somebody that he can *live with*, as he calls it; so that not being able to come to London myself, I hope you will excuse the trouble of this hasty account from

'Yours,

'GODOLPHIN.'[1]

The letter is a remarkable one. It was written by a statesman in the full tide of success, who had just been appointed to an office from which his colleague and correspondent had been, to all intents and purposes, ignominiously expelled. The writer was filled with triumph, yet under the smooth and friendly phrases of the letter there is not the slightest sign either of undue elation or of affected sympathy. The tone of the letter is indeed such as to render it almost incredible that its import profoundly concerned the interest and reputation of two great statesmen. The testimony of contemporaries is,

[1] Hyde Correspondence, British Museum Additional MSS. 15892. This letter has already been published.

however, decisive as to the reluctance of Rochester to quit the Treasury. He had not even the tact or the philosophy to conceal the disgust which he felt only too keenly. Nor could Godolphin, in spite of his self-possession, have altogether escaped some sensations of pain. Hyde was one of his earliest friends, and he could hardly supplant him without feeling the pangs which must accompany the first breaches in an old friendship. He could, however, unlike Rochester, console himself with reflecting upon his great success and rapidly improving prospects. His promotion in the Government was attended with a corresponding elevation in society. He was made a peer, with the title of Lord Godolphin of Rialton. His term of office was not, however, on this occasion, destined to endure long. Five months had scarcely elapsed, when an event occurred which not only reduced him from the high level to which he had attained, but threatened to be very prejudicial to his future prospects. King Charles II. died, and was quietly succeeded by his brother James, Duke of York.

The accession of James to the throne of England may well have filled Godolphin with consternation. The event seemed absolutely fatal to his success. His offences against James were numerous and unpardonable, and of a sort which any man would resent, and which a harsh man might, with the full approbation of the world, revenge. He had been the friend of James, and had wilfully violated his friendship; he

had attempted to deprive him of his right to the throne, and when this design had failed he had never cordially coalesced with the duke's partisans. More than all this, he continued to the end of the late king's reign to court the Prince of Orange—not, it is true, with the same zeal which he had displayed before the measure of exclusion was lost, but with sufficient energy to excite the animosity of a being so suspicious and tyrannical as James II. The very light of the new reign dawned upon an act which James can have regarded in no other aspect than as a transgression. Of all his adherents, Rochester had been the most faithful. He had served him loyally both in storm and in sunshine, and so deep was the sense of obligation which James entertained for his service, that he was only waiting to be declared king to appoint him Lord Treasurer. Yet Godolphin, a very few months before James's accession, had been instrumental in driving this faithful follower from a coveted office, and obliging him, amidst the ridicule of society, to submit to the insult of a mock promotion. Circumstances both before and after James's succession proved how obdurate was the heart of the king, when once his sullen humour had doomed an adversary to destruction. The retribution which it was within his power to inflict might now with confidence be expected to fall. Sure and condign punishment seemed the certain fate of Godolphin and Sunderland. To the surprise of all, they speedily assumed important posts in the new king's government. Sunder-

land's extraordinary subtlety had saved them. He beguiled Rochester, whom but a few weeks before he had almost driven in desperation to accept as a species of exalted exile the post of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland,[1] into the belief that their fortunes were identical, while the queen was encouraged to regard him as a support against her step-daughters. Success attended his stratagems. Sunderland was made Secretary of State; Godolphin, Lord Chamberlain to the queen.

The short and stormy reign of James II. was not suited to the character and genius of Godolphin. His nature and the king's were absolutely opposed. The king was violent, irrational, and above all things imprudent. Godolphin was an easy-going, matter-of-fact man, whose excess of prudence was perhaps his greatest defect. Any great or lasting cordiality between them on questions of policy was impossible; yet the king greatly admired Godolphin, and Godolphin was one of the last to abandon James, when ministers, generals, favourites, and children had flocked to the Prince of Orange. Thus, though Godolphin played no very prominent part while James was on the throne, his reputation continued to rise and his material prosperity to increase.

Unfortunately for the credit of Godolphin, he was concerned at the very commencement of the new reign in a transaction which hardly finds a parallel in English history. With Charles it might well have

[1] Barillon's Letters, February 19, 1685.

been hoped had been buried the venality and corruption which rendered his rule inglorious, if not infamous. But James was hardly seated on his brother's throne before he evinced proofs that he was as ready to sell his subjects under the name of religion, as Charles had been to procure money for his own self-indulgence. The curtain of the new reign lifted on a spectacle which would have been comic but for its sadness. We behold James, the monarch of one of the proudest kingdoms in Europe, deliberately abasing himself before the ancient enemy of his people and their religion. James had on his accession to the throne convoked a parliament; it was one of the few constitutional acts of his reign; for this praiseworthy measure he apologised immediately to Lewis XIV. of France, and expressed his determination in future to govern arbitrarily and alone. He was the governor of a Protestant nation, and the natural protector of its religion, yet he intimated to the French ambassador in London that he would employ every effort to uproot the Protestant faith and re-establish the supremacy of the Pope. To enable him to accomplish these great and pious designs, he wanted nothing, he hinted, but money and the protection of the French king. The suggestion thus broadly thrown out was greedily snatched at by Lewis, and he presented the King of England with a huge sum of money, practically on condition that it should be used to the injury of James's English subjects. The King of England, sobs almost choking his utterance,

implored the French ambassador to convey his gratitude to Lewis for a donation so magnificent and for a purpose so acceptable. Only one thing was wanting. James desired to convert this munificent gift into an annual tribute. A treaty was set on foot. Sunderland, Rochester, and Godolphin were the ministers employed by James to negotiate it. The terms they proposed were that the King of France should pay 3,000,000 of livres down, and 2,000,000 of livres for two years, on the condition, virtually, if not literally, expressed, that the English Parliament should be superseded.[1]

Such was the terrible crime which Godolphin and his colleagues, in conjunction with James, committed against England. Kings have been deposed and ministers beheaded for a smaller offence. Religious fanaticism may be pleaded for James as a feeble and doubtful apology for an absolutely inexcusable action; for a spiritual crown he hazarded a temporal one; in his madness he risked all, and he lost all. To his perverted mind the declarations and promises which he had made to his people were mere earthly obligations, to be broken and discarded in the service of what he considered a divine cause.

> My vow was earthly, thou a heavenly love,
>
> . . . . . .
>
> My vow was breath, and breath a vapour is;
> Then, thou fair sun, that on this earth doth shine,
> Exhale this vapour vow; in thee it is:

[1] Dalrymple's *Memoirs*, vol. i. pt. 1, b. 2, p. 168.

If broken, then it is no fault of mine.
If by me broke, what fool is not so wise
To lose an oath, to win a paradise ?

In spite of his gigantic faults, his bigotry, his cruelty, his vindictiveness, and his falseness, there are few people in the present day who will not entertain for James that sort of compassion which is extended to those who are scarcely accountable for their actions, and which may even induce the most censorious to extenuate in some degree the enormous treason which he meditated against his people. James, at all events, had the courage of his opinions; but what excuse can there be for Sunderland, Rochester, and Godolphin, whose minds were utterly untinctured with any religious enthusiasm, who lost nothing and who gained everything by the injury which they proposed to inflict upon their fellow-countrymen ? [1]

We do not know whether it will be considered any palliation of Godolphin's crime to allege that he certainly assisted in negotiating the treaty with France against his will, and probably did his best to modify its most obnoxious provisions. It was no part of his policy—in so far as he ventured to have a policy of his own—to dispense with parliaments, or to destroy the Church of England. He yielded, on this occasion as

[1] It should be said, perhaps, as some slight vindication of the conduct of Godolphin and his colleagues, that the best-informed people believed that no danger was incurred by the Protestant religion through the exertions of James to establish the Roman Catholic faith in England. Barillon, on March 5, 1685, writes to Lewis XIV. : ' C'est un projet si difficile dans son exécution, pour ne pas dire impossible, que les gens sensés ne l'appréhendent pas.'

on many others, to the commands of the king; but he did so with reluctance. In this respect he differed from his former chief. Sunderland was prepared to go any length which the king suggested. Godolphin would probably have gone any length which the king required. The French ambassador, Barillon, noted this difference between the characters of the two ministers, and, from the first, regarded Godolphin with some suspicion, while he accurately weighed the degree of danger which might be attached to his hostility. Hostility in an active sense was not to be dreaded from Godolphin. His object was to mould policies, not to create or to destroy them. He desired to establish himself at court by a reputation for wisdom and moderation, an effort which would have been doomed to failure had he commenced by pronouncing the king's favourite project a wicked one. Thus Godolphin rose in the king's estimation. James, to his surprise, found him a bold and energetic man, and spoke of him in high terms of approval. It is extremely probable that Godolphin may have employed the influence which he had acquired with the king to effect some change in mitigation of James's furious designs upon English liberties. We know on Barillon's authority that he regarded them with some aversion. If so, like so much that he did, it was done in the dark, and by following the crooked paths, which it is almost impossible for those of the present age to track. What, unfortunately, is only too clear to us is that he participated in a policy which

amounted to treason to his country, and that he did so with his eyes open, and unblinded by the religious bigotry of his master. Even in the days when it was not the fashion for ministers to sacrifice their offices for their opinions we might have supposed that a minister would resign his office before he sacrificed his country.

In 1686 Godolphin again became a Commissioner of the Treasury. His nomination to the Treasury was, as on a previous occasion, in consequence of Rochester's dismissal from it. Rochester had been as compliant a servant as the king was ever likely to find. He had been concerned in arranging the French treaty. He had supported James's arbitrary measures at home, and, in defiance of the law, was a member of the new Court of High Commission. He was compliant upon every point but one; he refused to make public recognition of the Church of Rome. Why he should logically have checked himself abruptly at this point, it is not very easy to see. The whole end of James's government was to proselytise, or rather coerce, the English to Roman Catholicism. It was the explicit object of his treaties with France, it was the almost proclaimed object of the illegal Court of High Commission. There was no reason in common sense why Rochester should have refused to profess a religion which he was employing illegal means to establish. Weakness, rather than a late return to virtue, appears the best interpretation of his inconsistency. Like many weak-minded or self-indulgent men, he deliberately refrained from

contemplating the nature and the consequences of the course which he wished to pursue, till his welcome ignorance was suddenly dispelled by being brought face to face with a name.

Some credit, however, is due to Rochester for demonstrating that he possessed opinions which he would not even yield to his own interests or to the commands of the king. His abject professions, his tears and his entreaties, while they represent him in an undignified and ridiculous light, evince the magnitude of the sacrifice he was making. His conduct proved, if it proved nothing else, that he possessed the principle which lies at the root of all noble actions and induces men to sacrifice themselves to an ideal notion of right. A religious pledge such as the king would have exacted from Rochester was probably in some negative fashion exacted from Godolphin. A declaration was not demanded, but there can be little doubt that Godolphin gave assurances concerning his religious opinions which were held by James to be satisfactory, and were morally undistinguishable from a public declaration of the old faith. The grain of individualism which we find in Rochester we miss in Godolphin. His religious opinions may not have been so violent as those of Rochester, or, with a more refining mind, he may justly have concluded that where the substance has been accepted it was unreasonable to disown the name. But we are still brought to the conclusion that, whether from real indifference to any high principles, religious,

political, or moral, or merely because his principles, whatever they were, were outbalanced by a regard for his own interests, he did not care to profess on this occasion opinions which he undoubtedly held. He was a Protestant, and probably intended to remain one, but he was anxious to have it understood that he might be converted. Before James had been on the throne six weeks Godolphin was an attendant at mass, and so skilfully did he practise his hypocrisy that each party was confident either of keeping or of winning him. No pursuit is more eagerly relished than that in which the victim barely but perpetually eludes the grasp of its pursuer. Godolphin was always on the verge of becoming a professed Roman Catholic. The king, whose priests were ever on the point of catching him, regarded him with the affectionate eye with which the sportsman regards the quarry that he has often hunted and is determined to bag. Masses were daily said in the king's chapel for his conversion, and vaunts were loudly expressed that he would at length be gathered into the fold. 'Lord Godolphin is in doubts,' triumphantly exclaimed Ellis, one of the four popish bishops, to the Protestant Sir Thomas Dyke. 'If he is in doubt with you, he is not in doubt with me,' was the reply. Thus, with infinite tact and prudence, Godolphin secured the support, or we should perhaps say avoided the animosity, of both the great religious parties of the State.

In his new position at the Treasury it is pleasant

to record that Godolphin was able to perform a service for an old friend and an eminent man. Since his wife's death, he had always maintained an intimate acquaintance with Evelyn, a friendship which, originating with Mrs. Godolphin, endured through life. In 1687 Evelyn, like many other suitors, was vainly applying to the Government for consideration of his claims. In the late Dutch war he had been one of the commissioners for the sick and wounded. Like so many others in public employment in this age, he found it impossible to recover from the Crown the arrears due for necessary outlay or salary. The petition is still extant in which he prays that his full claims may be allowed, and reminds the Government that when fifty thousand people were dying weekly of contagion he alone remained true to his duty while his brother commissioners shifted for themselves. Godolphin's influence procured for this petition a favourable reply, and Evelyn learnt, probably not for the first time, that a powerful friend commands speedier attention than a just cause.[1]

The short reign of James is crowded with some of the most startling incidents in English history, and perhaps for this reason no period is so extensively known or so generally attractive. He who has read nothing else is pretty sure to be familiar with the trial of the Bishops, the ejection of the Fellows of Magdalen

[1] Additional MSS. 15949, British Museum. Evelyn's *Diary*. June 2, 1687.

College, and the landing of William at Torbay. The epoch has been fortunate in its historians, and no less fortunate in circumstances which endue it with an almost theatrical interest. The variety of incidents, the energy of action, the violence of passion, and the last tremendous catastrophe, embrace all the elements essential to dramatic effect. It needs but the hand of a Shakespeare to invest the follies of James II. and the duplicity of his ministers with as tragic an interest as that which immortalises the weakness and childishness of Richard II.

But the period is a great deal richer in events than in actors. The person of the king occupies nearly the whole field. With the exception of Sunderland, there is scarcely a figure which draws our eyes away from him ; and even Sunderland plays an inferior part, somewhat similar to that of a meddlesome and ubiquitous schemer, whose machinations are endless, but who acts as much behind the scenes as before them. Tyrconnel blusters, Clarendon and Rochester whimper, but the real hero of the piece must be looked for in the king.

James was in fact his own minister. If he asked for advice he asked it of those only who would give but one answer, who were his advisers merely because of their meritorious determination to agree with whatever he proposed. Parliament, the Church, the Bench, had all been fashioned, or were in process of being fashioned, to square with his views of autocracy. Independence of thought was his rooted

aversion, and if he did not suffer it in the public institutions which were to some extent beyond his control, far less was he likely to tolerate it in that small circle of advisers whose persons and fortunes were at his mercy, and upon whom he could inflict all the punishments which a capricious tyranny might suggest. For these reasons, probably, James's ministers appear less frequently in the record of events than might have been expected. Godolphin's name is especially conspicuous by its absence, though when it is mentioned, it is mentioned in a manner and on occasions to convince us that he was regarded as a person of considerable importance.

The prosperity of the king had stifled all opposition; his calamities called countless agencies to life which had before apparently no existence. While everything was favourable to the king's views, his ministers clung to him in silent expectation that they were building their own fortunes; circumstances were no sooner adverse, than each was obliged to strike for himself, and to exchange his former silence for the loud voice of justification which compels attention. The political career of Godolphin, like that of other of his contemporaries, revives at the very moment that that of James was about to end. As a nest of ants which is rudely disturbed discovers numberless insects rushing hither and thither anxious to repair damage or to secure safety, so the destruction of James's plans roused hundreds of his ministers, dependents, and sycophants into eager activity to

restore their shattered hopes or to seek for favour from new patrons.

Thus as the fall of James approached, a change became manifest in Godolphin's conduct. In 1688 there was no person in the whole of England so powerful or so much dreaded as Jeffreys, the Lord Chancellor. He was the king's most useful tool, and he was utterly unscrupulous in attaining his objects. It is highly improbable that Godolphin would have ventured to make an enemy of this man, whose position, character, and manners were of a kind to overawe his somewhat timid nature, had he not desired to make his peace with the future, and to separate himself slightly from the past ; yet, in September, Godolphin resolutely opposed the Chancellor in council. The Chancellor accused him, and probably not without reason, of trimming.[1] The whole of England was trimming, and it was not likely that Godolphin, with his studiously acquired knowledge of men and things, should be less provident than his neighbours.

The events which led to the fall of James hurried themselves on apace. In the universal collapse of his government, he was deserted by nearly all—by those attached to him by ties of blood, as well as by ties of kindness. He was not even true to himself ; had he been so, the history of William's invasion might have been written in other characters. It must be said to Godolphin's credit that he was one of the

[1] Clarendon and Rochester Correspondence, Saturday, September 22, 1688.

last to abandon a desperate cause. As far as we can learn, he did his best to fortify the unfortunate king with good advice. He attempted to procure an interview between the king and the Bishop of Ely, with the object of conciliating the Church. He, along with others, advised the king, late as it was, to call a Parliament, and he employed his influence in preventing the popish lords attending a council at which their presence could have done nothing but excite observation.[1] He was one of the three commissioners whom James appointed to meet William of Orange at Hungerford,[2] and a story is related that, when James finally determined upon flight, Godolphin lent him a hundred guineas, which had been refused to him by his own Treasury. Godolphin acted in the last few months of the reign of James II. in a manner

[1] Clarendon and Rochester Correspondence, September 26 and November 27, 1688.

[2] It was asserted in a debate on the state of the nation, December 14, 1689, that the reason why Godolphin, Halifax, and Nottingham were sent by James as commissioners to William 'was not because they were in King James's interest, but rather because they had all along disapproved of his Majesty's conduct, and as such had the general approbation of the nation, and were most likely to be agreeable to his Highness.' This assertion was made in answer to an attack of Hampden's upon the king for employing these ministers. (Cobbett's *Parliamentary History*, vol. v. p. 479.) Had Godolphin strongly disapproved of James, it is likely that he would have joined William sooner; but it seems very probable that he had established a reputation for moderation, which made him generally an acceptable agent. It may, however, be right to observe that there are historical traces of a connection between the Prince of Orange and Godolphin some weeks before the landing of William at Torbay. According to Lord Dover, Godolphin and Churchill had apparently, in August 1688, spoken to the Prince of Orange in favour of Lord Dartmouth. If this is true it implies a friendly intercourse. (Macpherson's *Original Papers*, vol. i. p. 157.)

which, having regard to the conduct of his contemporaries, redounds greatly to his honour; and if it is true, as is stated by Sunderland, that he also strongly resisted at an earlier period the proposed repeal of the Act of Settlement[1] in Ireland, it must be admitted that he lived to some purpose, even in the short, stormy, and despotic reign of James II.

The growth of Godolphin's material prosperity in the reign of James II. is to some extent the measure of his political success. At the time of his wife's death he had a house in Scotland Yard; under James he acquired a country residence near Windsor. Godolphin could hardly have selected a spot more indicative of the position he had already attained, or of the importance of his official ties.

There is perhaps no pleasanter resort for a statesman than Windsor Park. Near to the capital, and still nearer to the residence of the sovereign, but not too near either of them, he enjoys, with tenfold relish, a leisure which may at any moment be interrupted by business. Here he may steep himself in the delights of the country, without experiencing the weariness which rural life often brings to a man whose mind has been immersed in the pleasures or labours of cities. The occupations which pursue him afford to his idleness the same exquisite flavour which we imagine that a dog derives from a bone that he tosses about and plays

[1] Sunderland's letter of justification, Chandler's *Debates*, vol. xv. p. 347.

with before he devours it. He has no intention of escaping altogether from business; it is the knowledge that business is there, that he will soon return to it, that he will gorge himself with it, that he will grow fat and powerful on it, which makes leisure grateful. We fancy that there are but few who, like the Roman emperor, would prefer the cultivation of cabbages to the pursuit of power. Were it not for the reflection that we might at any moment escape from it, a cabbage-garden would be a very dreary place indeed.

In the nineteenth century we still talk of the seclusion of Windsor Park; in the seventeenth century it was a solitude. It required twelve strong horses to drag Lady Sunderland's coach from London to visit Godolphin in his new house—twelve horses there, and twelve horses back, twenty-four in all; and the magnitude of the undertaking can be imagined when we recollect that only a few years before the Speaker of the House of Lords had tendered as an apology for his absence from the Upper House the impassableness of the roads between Kensington and Westminster. A quieter spot Godolphin could hardly have chosen. The villages and heaths of his native county could scarcely have furnished him with a more peaceful retreat.

The name of this new property was Cranbourne Lodge.[1] Its site, close to one of the park entrances,

[1] There seems to be no record in the Office of Woods and Forests of Godolphin's occupation of Cranbourne Lodge. On January 7

is familiar to all who are acquainted with Windsor. Only a fragment of the orginal house is left, and that, converted into a keepers' lodge, bears no trace of its former dignity to remind us that a couple of centuries ago its humble roof sheltered not only nobles and ministers of State, but even sovereigns. But time, who has dealt hardly with the old mansion, has been kinder out of doors. The knoll upon which the house stands is surrounded by fine trees, and overlooks the rich undulating woodland which composes this portion of Windsor Forest. At a distance of some miles Windsor Castle rises abruptly into view, and, elevated above the surrounding woods, crowns the landscape in a picturesque confusion of battlements and towers. Two hundred years ago, however, things were very different. Evelyn was just about to put into execution those plans for planting, of which we now reap the full benefit, and which resulted in the splendid avenue known as the Long Walk. Godolphin besought Evelyn to visit Cranbourne, and it is to Evelyn that we owe our knowledge of it as it existed in the reign of James II. Evelyn's description is short and concise; the picture presented the reverse of agreeable. The place was environed with rotten old pollards which corrupted the air.[1] The house itself was tolerable, the

(7 Will. III.) there is, however, a record of a grant to him at Windsor of 'a piece of ground then late within the possession of the Board of Works, and adjoining to his lordship's gardens.'

[1] The trees, however, were spoken of as very fine in 1707. In that

park was pretty, the gardens convenient, the ground clayey and moist, and the water vile. The trees which now form the chief attraction of Cranbourne were probably planted under the directions of Evelyn. The house when Godolphin bought it was not without some of that interest which is attached to a connection with great names. It had belonged in the preceding reign to Sir George Carteret, Treasurer of the Navy. Carteret had pulled down the larger portion of the old house, leaving only the room in which the Duchess of York had been born, and rebuilt the mansion with commodious and extensive additions. While in Carteret's hands Cranbourne had obtained some celebrity. It was here that Charles II., in one of those unworthy frolics in which he was ever too prone to indulge, was induced, in drunken obedience to the commands of his armourer, to drink on his knees a health to the Duke of York. It was here that Pepys, bearing the ill news of the attack on Bergen to Sir George Carteret, found that the only method of reaching the bedroom of the Secretary of the Admiralty in his unfinished house was up a steep ladder, and that the only way of imparting his infor-

year Lord Ranelagh represented to Lord Godolphin the irreparable loss which was falling on Cranbourne by the felling of 'the old but beautiful trees.' It was true, Lord Ranelagh said, that the trees were old, but still growing, and making a noble show and shade every summer, their number great, and no young trees could pretend to match them in fifty years. When cut, Cranbourne would look like Bagshot Heath. He prayed his lordship's pity for the old trees, 'and for his devoted servant old Ranelagh.' In reply it was said that Ranelagh was mistaken. No trees within a mile of Cranbourne had been marked. *Calendar of State Papers*, March 24, 1705–6.

mation was to be achieved by creeping into his bed. It was here that the noisiest revels of the time were conducted, that hospitality existed without discipline, that gentlemen and ladies practised the pastime of cushion-fighting, that the respectable and drowsy were shocked by the levity of the company or rendered sleepless by its noise. Such was the house which now came into the possession of Sidney Godolphin, and here it was that he occasionally resided for some years.

## CHAPTER IV.

### UNDER WILLIAM III.

Good unexpected, evil unforeseen,
Appear by turns, as fortune shifts the scene;
Some rais'd aloft, come tumbling down amain,
And fall so hard, they rise and bound again.

Sir Robert Walpole had commemorated his imprisonment in the Tower by scrawling his name on a pane of glass, and thus Lord Lansdowne moralises on the vicissitudes of his career. A maker of epigrams or composer of rhymes, had there been one in readiness in 1688, might have described the various shifts and turns of Godolphin's fortune in much the same language. Twice had he risen to the pinnacle of prosperity, to find himself face to face with apparent failure. He had opposed James when he was Duke of York, and James had become King of England. He had opposed William when Prince of Orange, and William, contrary to the laws of nature and man, had mounted upon James's throne. Nine men out of ten would have quarrelled with their fate and surrendered themselves to despair. Not so Godolphin. Nobody knew better than he

did how to repair a loss, or how to convert disaster into victory. He was versed in the intrigues of court, the knowledge of public business, and the management of men. The tools which had enabled him to construct his fortunes were still in his possession if he desired to restore them. Thus fortune, as men too often call the personal qualities which command success, still proved faithful, and the course of his official life was hardly interrupted by a change of sovereigns.

On February 14, 1689, Godolphin was appointed by William a Commissioner of the Treasury. Lords Mordaunt and Delamere were the other Commissioners, and Mordaunt was placed at the head of the Board. They both hated Godolphin, and were furious at having him for a colleague. Nor was the Whig party in general better pleased. The Whigs regarded the offices and places in the gift of the Crown as their legitimate booty. They had been the authors of the Revolution. They had risked their lives and estates for William, and for the liberties of the country. Were they, they asked, not to gather the fruits of their own harvest, or were those to be placed in authority over the people who had failed to defend their liberties ? The sentiments of the Whigs were not unnatural. A king less politic and wise than William would in all probability have considered them reasonable, and would have acted upon them.

It was, however, no portion of the policy of William III. to suffer the vanquished partisans of

James II. to be utterly crushed. From the beginning to the end of his reign he shunned the thought of relying solely upon either Whig or Tory party. He dreaded the revolutionary principles of the Whigs, though the Whigs had placed him on the throne of England; he dreaded the power and factiousness of the Tories, and would fain have governed without them, though he admitted that upon the Tories the safety of the monarchical system chiefly depended. On this account, in all probability, William showed from the earliest moment of his reign a prepossession for the Tories, and a preference for men like Godolphin over men like Howe. Unfortunately for William, the Tories were not prepared to acknowledge that he had a claim to the attributes which they freely admitted were the property of the sovereign. Between his person and his function William as ruler was rent in twain. 'The Whigs love me best,' he said; 'but the Tories are the best friends to the monarchy.' 'Ay,' answered Sunderland, 'the Tories are better friends to the monarchy than the Whigs; but your Majesty must remember that you are not their monarch.' William was, however, determined that there should be no appearance of proscription, and thus Godolphin, with other eminent Tories, was called upon to take part in his government. The merits of the Tory minister added to the dislike which already inspired his colleagues, and pointed with envy the natural malice of party hatred; but hated, envied, as he was, no man in England was so well versed in the

duties of the Treasury, nor could the king have made a more fitting selection.

Godolphin, indeed, possessed high qualifications for office, but there were objections to employing him which it is difficult to perceive how even William, with all his magnanimity and policy, contrived to surmount. Godolphin was the recognised agent of the fugitive king. Recent events had rendered this circumstance notorious. At a meeting of peers, convened, after the landing of William and the flight of James, to decide upon the steps to be taken for the security of the country, he acted almost in the capacity of his attorney.[1] James had left a letter behind him. This document it was proposed to read to the Lords. Godolphin, who had it in his possession, refused to read it. 'I grieve to say,' he said, 'that there is nothing in it which will give your lordships any satisfaction.' Nobody disputed the right of Godolphin to refuse to read the paper, nobody for a moment questioned that had it been for the advantage of James he would have read it, and nobody who has ever studied it can doubt that he did well to conceal from the public a document as vain and futile as was ever penned by fallen monarch to lure rebellious subjects to their duty. But his opposition to William took a more active shape than expressions of regret for the folly and obduracy of James. When the Convention Parliament met he was found in the

[1] Shrewsbury's Correspondence, December 1696: Somers to Shrewsbury.

ranks of the prince's opponents. In the disputes concerning the succession he voted with the party which favoured a regency; while in the House of Commons his brother Charles was openly charged by the Whigs with corresponding with James. It is certainly strange that under such circumstances William should have asked Godolphin to join his Government, and the explanation that the king desired to govern by a mixed administration seems scarcely sufficient.

The magnanimity of William was great, but it would not have been magnanimity, but folly, to have employed a statesman in high office whom he knew to be violently hostile to himself and anxious to frustrate his designs. However tolerant a ruler may be, he would be insane to call to his councils men whose object it is to overthrow his power. It would be equally rational to arm the man who desires to take our lives. Yet, unless William had grounds for believing that Godolphin was attached to his cause to a greater extent than has generally been supposed, it is this inconceivable folly of which he is accused.

It seems, therefore, probable to us that Godolphin, after William was once established on the throne by law, was neither so staunch to James nor so adverse to William as is frequently conjectured, and that William, who was well acquainted with Godolphin's character and inner political opinions, was able to discriminate between an hostility emanating from an objection to a certain fixed settlement of the crown,

and an hostility inflamed by personal opposition to himself as a usurper. Godolphin might quite consistently, after the abdication of James was a recognised fact, have partially favoured the Revolution, and at the same time have wished to modify its results in regard to the succession, without implying an inveterate antagonism to William's cause. It is one thing to accept a change in principle, and another thing to accept it to the smallest details which its advocates demand.

Nor when we consider Godolphin's relations at this time with William should we forget, as confirming the opinion which we have expressed, the policy which he had professed in the reign of Charles II. Godolphin had then desired to exclude James from the throne, and place William on it. Circumstances, it is true, had altered his plans. The accession of James to the crown, and Godolphin's own increasing prosperity, had no doubt led him to regard the pretensions of the Prince of Orange with less satisfaction than when his fortunes were less assured. The final risks attending revolution must have been as distasteful to him as to most men who are about to change a government under which they have won wealth and honour, for a government which they know nothing about. Yet, the step once irrevocable and the revolution made, Godolphin was not unlikely to recur to those views which he had formerly held, now that there were no considerations of interest or timidity to weigh against them. Thus it is

possible that William may have considered that the opposition of Godolphin was directed rather against the conditions under which he was to govern than against the circumstance of his sovereignty.

The reasons, therefore, for disbelieving that Godolphin was very hostile to William are strong; but had the reasons been weak instead of strong they would probably have sufficed to satisfy the king. No monarch was ever more anxious than William III. to put a favourable construction on the doubtful acts of his subjects. He proved over and over again in the course of his reign that he preferred to be ignorant of information which many Governments would have lavished fortunes to purchase. His object was to find out what was good, not what was bad, among his people. Had it been otherwise, the task of government, difficult as it was, would have been rendered well-nigh impossible. Nearly all his great English subjects had some connection, however slight, with the Court of St. Germains. Numbers of the gentry regarded the exiled king with deep affection, and were incapable of separating themselves abruptly from past associations. At the very moment when William was hovering off our shores, the long winter evenings in many an old hall and manor were probably beguiled in relating round the blazing fire the history of some exploit in the Civil War which had become the theme of family pride. The Stewarts had lived, suffered, governed, died, in England for several generations,

and to hope that James at St. Germains would be forgotten would have been to hope that the revolution which had changed England had changed human nature. Such being the condition of England, William was precluded, as much by necessity as by choice, from inquiring too closely into the sentiments of his servants. Every sovereign, however, has not the wisdom to discover what the necessities of his situation are, or if he discovers them the resolution to act upon them. William was both conscious of them, and determined to be guided by them. He pursued his ends with a tenacity of purpose which no mortification or resentment could turn, and in a manner which displayed incredible self-restraint and sagacity.

From the Whigs, however, Godolphin could expect no such toleration ; nor did he get it. They hated him both for what he was doing and for what he had done. But for the present every effort to dislodge him from office proved abortive. It was in vain that Hampden directed against him a resolution which would have driven him from power, that he declared that Henry IV. of France might as well have chosen a minister from the League, or the Dutch when redeemed from popery a ruler from among the agents of Alva, as that William III. should call to his Government a servant of James II. It was in vain that the Indemnity Bill was so woven that its meshes should not prove large enough to permit his escape. He maintained his position till the dissolution of Parliament filled the House of Commons again

with Tories, when, for some inexplicable reason—from dislike, perhaps, of occupying a subordinate place at a Board over which he had once presided, or from motives of more profound policy—he retired from the Government, to appear in it again, after the lapse of a few months, in the higher office of First Commissioner of the Treasury.

The commission of Godolphin as First Commissioner of the Treasury was dated November 15, 1690. He was hardly installed in office before his name became involved in those mysterious and treasonable conspiracies which have cast so deep a shadow upon his own fame and upon that of some of his most illustrious contemporaries. The haze which shrouded the intercourse between the fallen king at St. Germains, and the adherents who supported, or pretended to support him in England, was never fully penetrated at the time, and has never entirely lifted since. To this day it conceals or distorts the history of nearly every statesman of the reign of William III. To form, therefore, any just opinion of Godolphin's public life at this period, it is absolutely essential that we should first of all attempt to understand the medium through which we see him, in the same way that a man who desires accurately to describe an object which he sees through imperfect glass, must, before doing so, study the imperfections of the glass and its effects upon the object whose likeness it is his ambition to portray. We shall therefore briefly discuss the character of the charges of treason which

were made against Godolphin at intervals through the reign of William III. The charge made against him by Bulkeley in 1691 is a fair example of all.

In 1691 there appeared in London a man of the name of Bulkeley. Of Bulkeley we know little, except that he was an agent of James II., and an old friend of Godolphin. From his occupation, however, we may safely conclude that he possessed many of the characteristics of that mischievous class of busybodies whose love of excitement and intrigue, or almost insane attachment to a most undeserving monarch, led them to trade upon the misfortunes of the times, and compromise the fame of honest men. Like others of his vocation, he was almost certainly a fanatic or a rogue; and to either fanatic or rogue the temptation to secure for James the submission, real or pretended, of a great officer of State was enormous. Nobody probably knew better than Bulkeley how intense would be the exultation at St. Germains if he could assure James that Godolphin, who seemed lost to his cause, was still his devoted servant, and that the Exchequer of England had for its president a resolute but secret foe of the usurper William. Nor did the obstacles in his way seem by any means insuperable. He was the friend of Godolphin. He could procure interviews with him. He could entangle him in conversations in which words might be dubious and meanings perverted. If Godolphin refused to become a traitor, he might at all events represent him as prepared to become one. The

inducement was great, the task was hopeful, and he made up his mind to accomplish it. Thus Bulkeley laid his plans. He only waited for an opportunity of executing them. And an opportunity such as he sought is not as a rule long in coming, for it is usually manufactured. The tempter called upon Godolphin in his office, and commenced to unfold his scheme of treason. Godolphin conducted himself as any honest man might have done who was nevertheless friendly to his visitor. He did not refuse to converse, but when the conversation drifted in a dangerous direction he prepared to leave the room. For the moment Bulkeley was thwarted, but not for long. A few hours later, meeting Marlborough and Godolphin walking in the park, he invited them to dinner, where he declares that Godolphin's reserve forsook him, and he gave utterance to professions of attachment to James.[1]

This is the singular story which Macpherson tells as an illustration of Godolphin's treason in 1691. If by it we are intended to understand that Godolphin was prepared to plot for the restoration of James, the tale is indeed a marvellous one, for it is absolutely opposed to every estimate of his character, whether friendly or hostile. It has been said of him that if there was one thing in the world which he detested more than revolution, it was counter-revolution, that his nature was so timid and his poltroonery so great, that he not only feared to encounter the storm, but

[1] Macpherson's *Original Papers*, vol. i. p. 236.

that he shrank from its very approach ;[1] yet we are asked to believe that Godolphin had no sooner, with unexampled good fortune, escaped from one revolution, than he was actually anxious to plunge headlong into the vortex of another, and that, oblivious of the perils of the tempest which had passed over him, he was engaged in manufacturing the elements of a fresh and perhaps more fatal storm. Nor was anybody more astonished with Bulkeley's story than James himself when he became acquainted with it. He considered Godolphin deeply engaged in the revolution, and it seemed to him highly improbable that he, of all others, should be already proffering him his service. The news was unquestionably strange, and it behoves us to receive it with at least as much suspicion as did the credulous outcast for whom it was intended.

It must be admitted that accusations such as Bulkeley's are vague, shadowy, and unsatisfactory, easy to make, and difficult to repel. An agent of James makes a statement, and James believes it, and upon these flimsy grounds we call for an elaborate, perhaps impossible, refutation to a charge made by a man of whose veracity we know nothing, and believed in with difficulty by another who was notoriously the victim of a hundred impositions. Justice demands that if we have no method of weighing the evidence

[1] What did he e'er in all his life perform,
But shrink at the approach of every storm.
'Faction display'd,' *State Poems.*

of such men as Bulkeley, we should at least thoroughly establish their character for trustworthiness before crediting statements which seem contrary to all probability. But while there is not the slightest presumption, as far as we are aware, in favour of Bulkeley's accuracy, there is considerable presumption in favour of his want of it. James's agents naturally wished to convey to him such news as he would like to hear. Their reputation, their hopes of reward, all depended upon the favourable reports which they could give of their proceedings in England. They were highly interested in James's success, and were eager that he should contribute to their efforts such personal support as would most likely lead to success, and there was no better way of stimulating his energy and securing his co-operation than by flaunting the prospect of success before his eyes. They were highly interested in extolling their own services, and there was no better method of doing so than by enumerating the many great men whom their artifices had entrapped. The inducement, indeed, to colour and misrepresent was always before their eyes. We do not mean to assert that they were all wilfully false, and we are quite prepared to admit that there were many who were false who were unconsciously false. But the minds and morals of men are coloured by the circumstances of their lives ; and the casuistry, the perverted morality, the twisting of nearly every natural sentiment of honour, duty, and patriotism for the purpose of endowing a bad cause with the

semblance of justice was as fatal to the honesty of the Jacobite agents as a prolonged intercourse with rogues is to the virtue of good men. It is just, therefore, to those whom they accused to weigh the testimony of the agents of James with great care, and where there is any incompleteness in it to discount very largely from its value.

The particular attributes of the age should also not be forgotten in weighing the testimony of James's informers. The scrupulous regard to accuracy which, as a rule, at the present time characterises any serious charge against the honour of an individual was then totally unknown. It was the age of false witnesses, of false plots, of innocent victims, and of hardened and abandoned perjurers. The fabrication of fictitious evidence, an offence far worse in degree than the loose and unauthentic assertions with which we charge the Jacobites, was the odious fashion of the day. Preachers, writes Macaulay, designated it as our peculiar sin, and prophesied that it would draw upon us some awful national judgment.[1] To some extent the prediction has been verified. Had it not been for the Jacobite plot-mongers, their countless and reckless intrigues, their false plots, their undoubted and pernicious power over men by the exercise of threats and of promises, we believe that many of the great names which have descended to us besmirched and blackened would at the present moment shine bright and unsullied on the pages of history ; but, however

[1] Macaulay, vol. vi. p. 177.

this may be, it is clear, on the one hand, that the testimony of the Jacobite agents must be received with caution, and, on the other, that the professions which they extorted from public men must be regarded in many respects in the same manner as we regard declarations wrung from accused persons by the terror of consequences.

And if such were the agents of James—men whose patriotism, if it deserved the name, was for the most part alloyed with sentiments of a very different description—what manner of man was James himself, upon whose record we largely rely for furnishing us with a correct recital of these intrigues? Through life he was singularly distinguished for his utter incapacity to appraise at their true value the professions of his servants. At the very crisis of his fate those whom he most trusted fell away from him, and the last days of his reign were the first days of his disillusionment. If he trusted those whom he should have doubted, he was even more foolish in doubting those whom he should have trusted. Lewis XIV., with his own hand, wrote to inform him of William's threatened invasion. James gave him no credit. Sir Bevill Skelton, his ambassador at Paris, induced D'Avaux to take the only steps which could avert disaster. James recalled him and sent him to the Tower.[1] Truly did the unfortunate king say that Providence designed to lead him through the paths of affliction to the grave. But the affliction was

[1] Macpherson's *Original Papers*, vol. i. p. 263.

entirely of his own making, and not the work of Providence further than that Providence had endowed him with a stupid and a purblind mind. Why then should we expect from the king at St. Germains—where his natural shortness of vision was still further impaired by distance, where he was surrounded by unscrupulous and irresponsible advisers, where his natural self-mystifications could find no possible correction—a clearness of sight which he never possessed under more favourable circumstances? Why should we admit that he was grossly deceived by Sunderland and Marlborough when they pretended to serve him while he still had power to reward them, and deny that it is highly probable that he was equally deceived by those who protested their willingness to serve him now that to serve him was as likely to be rewarded by death as by distinction? And why, last of all, should he not have been deceived by his own agents, whose vocation absolutely required that they should employ dissimulation and play upon the credulity of men? But it may be urged for James that the rude shock of his stupendous misfortune had opened his eyes. Not so. James, the rash, the bigoted, the impolitic, the deluded King of England, learnt absolutely nothing in his exile. His errors were confirmed, and not corrected by his fall; if he was rash before, he was rasher afterwards; if he was bigoted before, he was more bigoted afterwards; if he was easily deceived before—we say it with conviction—it was infinitely easier to

deceive him afterwards; that he was deceived by Godolphin and many others we do not deny, nor do we for a moment desire to extenuate their guilt; but in the moral gravity of the guilt there is all the difference between mere insincerity and an almost inexpiable crime.

The extraordinary facility which James possessed of self-deception is a circumstance not to be forgotten by those who have to weigh his testimony; and for this reason we should also carefully note the degree of faith which his best-informed contemporaries reposed in his veracity. He deceived himself constantly, completely, and honestly; but we greatly doubt whether he ever really deceived those about him. The French minister, Louvois, was an able and astute man. France, during a great part of William's reign, was at war with England, and it was specially the duty of Louvois to collect all the information that could be obtained as to the condition of the English people. Yet Louvois studiously and almost rudely ignored the advice and the communications which poured in upon him in torrents from St. Germains. Melfort was perhaps as faithful a supporter of James as was to be found among the small band of exiles which had shared the fortunes of their fallen king; but it is doubtful whether even Melfort altogether believed the gossip which came from England concerning the friendly disposition of the English ministers.[1] Nor is

[1] 'If the men of rank who are in the Prince of Orange's interest, and at the same time correspond with the King of England, are sincere

the scepticism of either Louvois or Melfort surprising —scarcely a month passed which did not furnish to the world an example of James's extraordinary credulity. If he was convinced of one thing more than another, it was that the English fleet under Russell was unflinchingly loyal to his cause. The English fleet no sooner encountered the French fleet, which represented his fortunes, in the Channel than it inflicted upon it at La Hogue one of the most fatal defeats which has ever befallen the naval arms of France. If there was one point which he considered more absolutely indisputable than another, it was that the populations of the north and west of England were panting for his restoration; yet Tourville's squadron, bearing an invading force, was scarcely descried from Torbay before the whole coast of Devonshire swarmed with a mighty host of people, determined at all hazards to repel the soldiers whom Lewis had devoted to his cause. Thus, the allies and adherents of James learned to doubt his knowledge and accuracy, and smiled incredulously when he boasted of the multitude of his friends, and of the great English statesmen who, enjoying honour and safety under William, were prepared to risk all which they had won and all which they possessed to place the crown again upon his head. Nor was their scepticism wonderful; what does seem incredible is that

in their professions, which, *though difficult to be believed*, is very possible,' &c., &c. Memorial in Melfort's writing intended for the French Ministry, November or December 1692, or January 1693. Macpherson's *Original Papers.*

the assertions of James, which were utterly insufficient to convince contemporaries so well informed and interested as Louvois on the one hand and, as it afterwards proved, William on the other, should have received so large a measure of assent from posterity.

Moreover, James held out no inducements to men, who had already everything in the world they most wanted, to revolt. In return for neutrality only, he promised pardon and confirmation of privileges;[1] and more than neutrality there is no reason to suppose that Godolphin ever pretended to offer. It is hardly, then, possible to suppose that a statesman like Godolphin, bearing rank, enjoying office, exercising influence, possessing, in short, everything that the heart of a successful and ambitious man holds dear, was prepared to risk his fortunes on a promise extorted by the cruelty of circumstances from one who was more likely to be mindful of his revenge than of his word. It seems utterly incredible that a man, no longer young, with a large experience of affairs, with a reputation for prudence and talent which was eventually to justify itself in the very highest degree, should have deserted James merely for the pleasure of deserting William a few months afterwards; that he should have rated his life and fortune at so cheap a price that, having incurred the terrible dangers of treason once, he was

[1] Macpherson's *Original Papers*, August 1694.

prepared to encounter them a second time to place upon the throne a man whom he had mortally offended, whose vindictive temper was known never to pardon, and whose voice even from exile breathed punishment rather than mercy. The proof must be very strong, indeed, before it can convince us that a man of Godolphin's character would voluntarily jeopardise his social position and even his very existence in any active plot against William. That he desired James to think precisely what James did think—namely, that he was his sincerest friend and earnest well-wisher—is probable enough. His courtly phrases and friendly messages were seed not intended to flourish unless fertilised by the blood which the impending storm of counter-revolution seemed to threaten. Then, indeed, it was to bring forth fruit in due season; but Godolphin, unless his character was very different from our conception of it, was glad to see the storm pass away, glad to think that the seed he had so prudently sown should remain unfruitful in the soil, and that his established fortunes should not be hazarded in the vicissitudes of civil war. Such are some of the reasons, at all events, which induce us to regard the reports of Godolphin's treason with suspicion. There still remain some other points to consider.

Through the whole of the period from 1690 to 1696, when Godolphin's complicity with the Jacobites is supposed to have been greatest, he was anxious to resign office. Now we are informed upon the most un-

deniable authority[1] that he was by the express orders of James commanded to remain at the Treasury. It is curious that this should have been so, as we are also told that Shrewsbury's resignation was exacted by James as a pledge of his fidelity, and it is difficult to see what special reasons existed to separate the case of Godolphin from that of Shrewsbury. There can be, however, no doubt about the matter. James certainly directed Godolphin to remain at his post, and Godolphin, in spite of this command, determined to retire, and assigned three reasons for his decision. To Sydney he pleaded domestic obstacles to public life: he had, he said, just married; an elderly man engaged all day in business would not do well to bring his wife to court.[2] To William he offered another excuse: his health was bad; the duties of office onerous; his strength was unequal to their discharge. To the emissaries of James he furnished yet another reason. It was impossible for him, he said, to betray his trust; to serve James he must retire, for he could not serve him and at the same time remain the confidential servant of William. There are some cases which

[1] Macaulay.

[2] The allusion to Godolphin's second marriage will be found in one of the appendices to Dalrymple's *Memoirs* in a letter from Sydney to the king dated February 3, 1691, N.S. It is the only reference to a second marriage which I have come across. In 1679, about a year after the death of Mrs. Godolphin, there was a report that Godolphin was going to be married again. It was without foundation, and Godolphin was annoyed at it. Sydney's *Diary*. A letter from Lady Sunderland to Sydney, December 16, 1679.

acquire strength from an array of cumulative reasons produced in their support ; others which on this very account lose whatever strength they possess. Godolphin's explanations convince us of nothing, except that he did not choose to state his true reason for desiring to leave office. It is, however, perfectly certain that his intention to retire could not have been otherwise than offensive to James, and that had James been restored to the throne such conduct would not have been forgotten or forgiven. Nor would at least one of his reasons, and that the most honourable, have justified him before the late king. James could not have understood or appreciated the scruple which forbade Godolphin to betray the master whose bread he ate. The great object of James's life had been to persuade men to violate the most sacred trusts. By him judges had been induced to betray the law, clergymen to betray religion, and statesmen to betray those whose interests they should have protected. Treason was the lesson which he taught to all, which he exacted and expected from all—treason to everything and every one but himself. Godolphin's refusal to betray William would undoubtedly have been regarded by James as treason to himself.

One point alone remains to be noticed. James directed Godolphin to remain in office. Godolphin, as we have just said, declared on the other hand that he would resign it. He did not resign for five years. Why was his resignation so long deferred ?

Does it indicate a change in favour of James? We think not: William was as anxious as James that Godolphin should remain in the Government, and it was to the solicitations of William rather than to those of James that Godolphin yielded. Godolphin, we are persuaded, wished to leave the Government in spite of the arguments of both his present and his past masters; but he was utterly unable to do so in the face of William's opposition.

It may seem strange that a minister in such a matter should not have been able to follow his own inclinations. But a study of the correspondence between William III. and Shrewsbury in connection with Shrewsbury's either resigning or accepting office will show how great were the difficulties thrown in the way of the minister who desired to do what he liked. It required a very determined man to resist the importunities of the king, and a very strong man, if he did resist them, not to suffer severely for so doing. In 1690 Shrewsbury left the Government; in 1694 he returned to it. Before he was permitted to retire from office the obstinacy with which the king opposed his wishes threw him into a fever; before he consented to return to it he suffered an absolute persecution. It was not enough that he said that he did not wish for office, that if he accepted it he should find no party to support him, that his health was bad: the king descended even to intrigues to win him, and employed the services of his own mistress, Mrs. Villiers, to obtain an end which was

beyond his own powers of persuasion or authority. When Shrewsbury came to town in the winter to attend Parliament, the ladies of the court arranged plots to bring him into the king's presence. His life was rendered miserable, and he bitterly lamented that he was not buried under the snows which then lay deep around his country-seat. To go abroad, he said, was the only way to escape from the pursuit of the king. Entreaties and arguments were backed by promises of promotion. A dukedom, he was told, would be the reward of compliance. He, however, had the firmness—or the obstinacy, as the ladies of the court called it—temporarily to resist either entreaties or temptations. But, ineffectual as the king's proceedings may have been for a time with Shrewsbury, they may have prevailed with weaker or less confident men. They might easily have induced Godolphin to offer a grumbling support to a Government which his own inclinations would have led him to quit. That Godolphin, however, wanted to resign is certain. He was probably actuated by a combination of reasons—in part by some of those which he himself stated, in part by the uncertainty of the continuation of William's occupation of the throne; but mostly, we feel convinced, in consequence of the great confusion of the public finances, coupled with the king's reckless methods of procuring and spending money.

All the letters written by Godolphin to the king or by the king to Godolphin during the years 1691–

1694, all the debates that have been preserved in parliamentary history, confirm this impression. The behaviour of Godolphin, which is inexplicably mysterious when ascribed alone to illness, sedition, or domestic precaution, becomes as clear as daylight when judged by a more honourable and common-sense test. His policy becomes natural to his character, and his character is in harmony with our conjectures of his policy; what has irritated us with its perverse unfittingness, only to be unsatisfactorily accounted for by the subtle shifts of a Machiavellian mind, falls at once into its place with the facility and neatness of a child's puzzle. As has often been said, prudence was the strong feature of Godolphin's character; a prudence which was not timidity, as timidity implies that reason is dominated more or less by fear—but a prudence so sensitive that it was unconsciously affected by every external circumstance. His mind was of a sort which, to use the political phraseology of the present day, always inclined to be 'in touch' with the controlling influences of the kingdom. In his second period of office there was much in public affairs to alarm a sensitiveness so delicate. Godolphin observed that the political heavens were dark and threatening, and his peculiar training naturally indicated to him the quarter from which danger was to be apprehended, and upon whom the bolts of the tempest would fall. He was an excellent and experienced financier. Nobody knew better than he did how great was the confusion of the national

finances, nor the constantly increasing drain which the war imposed upon the resources of the country. Nobody was more alive to the fact that the House of Commons was daily growing more jealous of this lavish and uncontrolled expenditure ; that angry murmurs against the Commissioners of the Treasury had already been uttered within its walls ; that party enemies had already hinted that the faults of a valiant and wise prince might be properly visited on his advisers. Godolphin, with his long experience of the Treasury, with the consciousness of the abuses existing in it, with his profound and, as his whole life proved, accurate insight into the future of political and parliamentary progress, must have been well aware that his office was not only a difficult, but was fast becoming a dangerous one. Under the circumstances, that he should have been driven either to remonstrate or to resign was exactly what might have been expected, and precisely what occurred.

Nor was Godolphin inclined to suffer for abuses with which he had no sympathy. He condemned many of the objectionable practices which regulated the business of the Treasury. A methodical man, he could not approve of an utter want of method. A careful man, he could not but object to the most profuse prodigality. He remonstrated with the king on the mismanagement of his finances in the very strongest terms—in terms, indeed, so strong that we do not recollect to have seen any letters of what may

be termed so 'downright' a description during the whole of this period. His advice, too, was eminently good, and the king, though he did not always follow it, was wise enough to value the man who gave it. It was also conceived in an absolutely different spirit to that of Marlborough, and is therefore interesting, not only as an illustration of Godolphin's views in respect of finance, but in respect also of his fidelity to the king. Marlborough would have ruined William III. by constitutional means; he would have placed him in a dilemma in which he would either have been confronted by his Parliament, or stripped of the power of resisting his enemies. Godolphin, it was also alleged, desired to restore King James by constitutional methods, and it was asserted that his prudent opposition to violent methods did the Jacobite cause great harm. Here was an opportunity of testing his professions. As head of the Treasury, he might have encouraged the king in extravagance, and involved him in ruin, not only constitutionally, but in a manner almost to defy detection. The Jacobite intriguers, with all their running to and fro, their chattering and their gossiping, never hatched a scheme which would have been more likely than a policy thus simple and astute to precipitate William from the throne of England. Why did Godolphin, steeped as he was said to be to the very lips in treason, neglect this golden opportunity of destroying the king in a manner so conformable to his alleged professions? Why did he offer William ad-

vice so sound and so wholesome, but so unpalatable that the king almost quarrelled with him for giving it? Why did he actually warn him against the dangers into which the friends of James wished to lure him?[1] Had Godolphin been inspired by Marlborough's refined treachery, he would not have attempted to check an expenditure which was more certain than anything else to bring a headstrong king, an enthusiast in a great cause, a cause which could only thrive by being gorged with gold, into opposition with a parsimonious Parliament, just acquiring a knowledge of its own powers, and hating the Dutch nearly as much as it did the French. Here are all the elements of one of those deep-laid plots which rejoiced Marlborough's heart, and in which posterity is too ready to believe that Godolphin shared. Yet this glorious opportunity was lost, and the statesman who, if the accusations against him are true, should have blasted the cause of the usurper with curses, blessed it instead with words of beneficial counsel.

If, then, we wish to discover the reason which prompted Godolphin's desire for resignation in the early part of the reign of William III., we are satisfied that we must study the financial history of the time even more carefully than the secret correspondence of Jacobite busybodies.

The autumn of 1690, in which Godolphin accepted office as First Commissioner of the Treasury, brought

[1] Dalrymple, vol. ii. pt. ii. b. i. app. p. 32; Godolphin to William, 1694.

with it every prospect of financial distress. The want of money had already been greatly felt, and, as was quite natural, complaints were made of the large amounts lavished upon pensions and upon secret services. The Government was in truth almost bankrupt, the people were groaning under the necessary expenses of the war. The general poverty, it was said, was unknown to the king. He, it was complained, who saw nothing but coaches and six, and feasted nowhere but at great tables,[1] was necessarily unacquainted with the grinding want which was rapidly ruining the country. But, however ignorant William was of the poverty of his subjects, he was quite aware of his own. His speech on opening Parliament, in October 1690, was a confession of absolute impecuniosity. He returned from his victory of the Boyne to inform the House that his army was in arrears, and his revenue so pledged that, unless at once cleared, it would very shortly be completely engaged in paying off the debts already charged against it.[2] The House voted supplies, and within two months after his first speech the king made another, informing Parliament that there was no provision for the civil government. During the year 1692 affairs grew, if possible, worse. The pay of the army was, as usual, in arrears. A motion made to postpone consideration of the navy and army estimates for a few days was met by the objection that even this delay was impracticable.

[1] Cobbett's *Parl. Hist.*, vol. v. p. 562, 1690.

[2] *Ibid.*, October 2 and November 25, 1690; December 3, 1691; November 25, 1692.

The exchequer was empty. Its credit was not even worth a thousand pounds. 'We have not subsistence for the army,' said Sir Stephen Fox, 'not for one day more.' To complicate the situation still further, a spirit of inquisition had been aroused in the House of Commons, and the more that was disclosed, the more need there seemed for inquiry. Many of the public accounts were irregularly audited; those of the king's household had not been made up for ten years. Confusion and debt existed everywhere, and it appeared that a financial crisis, accompanied in all probability by a parliamentary explosion, might at any moment be anticipated.

The position of the First Commissioner of the Treasury was clearly not a pleasant one. He had to serve two imperious and exacting masters. He was the servant of a Parliament which was suddenly inspired with the flame of the purest virtue, and of a king who intended to circumvent his Parliament in every way which he could. The king naturally leant to the somewhat arbitrary methods of his predecessors; and he had the practice, if not the spirit, of the Constitution on his side. The House of Commons was rapidly preparing to turn the spirit of the Constitution into its practice. Godolphin had succeeded to an office where the abuses of generations were rampant, and which it would take the work of generations to purify. He was distraught between the two great contending powers. He had to obey the king and to satisfy the Commons, and he succeeded in this

task as well, perhaps, as it was possible for any man to do.

Under the circumstances, however, it is neither wonderful that Godolphin wished to retire from the Government, nor that William determined to keep him in it. Nor is it extraordinary that in his almost compulsory occupation of office Godolphin, short of treason, should have shown some coldness to an administration which he notoriously desired to leave. He ceased to attend Cabinet councils, and confined himself entirely to the business of the Treasury.[1]

Such conduct could not pass without observation and criticism in an age when every public man was suspected, and when every one who was suspected was watched by the eyes of a hundred self-constituted informers. The conduct of Godolphin excited the suspicions of Sydney, and the king's English favourite, as he was called, transmitted to William on the continent his doubts of Godolphin's fidelity. 'The Club,' he wrote to the king, July 1692, alluding to a small body of disaffected men,[2] was framing measures hostile to him. He could not say for certain whether Godolphin acted with the Club or not; but it was a remarkable fact, and one which he hoped William would notice, that, in spite of Godolphin's constant talk of leaving town and going to Tunbridge to drink the waters, he still remained in London.

[1] Sydney to William, February 27, $\frac{1690}{1691}$, and March 6, 1691. Dalrymple's *Memoirs*, vol. iii. pp. 180, 248.

[2] July 12, 1692, Sydney to William. Dalrymple's *Memoirs*.

To any dispassionate person many reasons might have suggested themselves as likely, perhaps as more likely, to account for this delay than participation in treasonable designs. The king's service might seem as good a reason as the king's disservice for the uncertain plans of the First Commissioner of the Treasury in a time of peculiar trial and embarrassment. But Sydney, with the readiness to convict which was characteristic of the age, at once concluded that as Godolphin did not start for Tunbridge so soon as was expected he remained in town for the purpose of concocting treason with the Club. The suspicion was absolutely groundless. Godolphin was not anxious to remain in London. He was, on the contrary, eagerly petitioning the king to permit him to take some rest in the country. And far from it being remarkable that he was still in London when Sydney on July 12 wrote to the king, it was not till July 17 [1] that the king, writing from Genappe, accorded him the permission for which he begged, and even then with the reservation that it should be confirmed by the queen. Nor, in fact, did he ever go to Tunbridge at all, but to Cranbourne, where, as he observed to Blathwayte, he was, in case of pressure, only three hours from London.[2]

Such instances of error should make us cautious how we accept the vague and damaging accusations

[1] Additional MSS. 24905, f. 20, British Museum. July 17, 1692, William to Godolphin.

[2] Additional MSS. 9735, British Museum. This letter is not dated, but I think was clearly written in the summer of 1692.

which were freely made, and too freely accepted, at this period in regard to public men. Had William entertained the slightest doubt of Godolphin's loyalty, he could have hardly concealed it in 1692. The year was one of the most gloomy in his whole reign. The fear of a formidable invasion from France was rendered more terrible by the knowledge of a formidable conspiracy in England. Yet neither before nor after Sydney's insinuations did William seem for a moment to question Godolphin's fidelity. 'I confess,' he wrote to Godolphin early in the year 1692 on the subject of his proposed resignation, 'when I think of it I cannot persuade myself that you will continue in this resolution, and that you have too much friendship for me to wish to abandon me in such a conjuncture. The personal friendship that I have had for you ever since I knew you makes me hope that you will return it on this occasion. I can with truth assure you that the wish I have to see you continue in my service does not so much proceed from the benefit that I shall draw from it, as to have the satisfaction of having near me a person for whom I have such a personal friendship, and of whom I have so good an opinion. If you have the least for me, I am sure that when you have well considered the thing, you will not continue in your resolution, and will give me this satisfaction which will certainly be a great relief to me in all the disagreeable affairs which I have upon my hands.'[1] And again, about

[1] William to Godolphin, Hague, February $\frac{6}{16}$, 1691. Additional MSS. 24905, f. 3, British Museum.

a month after he had received Sydney's letter, August 28: 'I hope that you and all my other friends will assist me in surmounting all the difficulties which are foreseen, the cabals which are already forming to give me trouble and to do harm to the Government, and to all Europe. God grant that we may surmount them.'[1] No monarch would pen such a letter to a minister who he knew was prepared to betray him. Such conduct would not even have had the merit of successful hypocrisy, for it would have deceived nobody. As William, therefore, dismissed such charges as Sydney's against Godolphin, so may we. William knew with what manner of men he had to deal. He knew Sydney well, and probably knew well also the sources of his intelligence. He knew, too, the secrets of the Jacobites, which were never well kept, far better than we know them; yet he not only conferred upon Godolphin offices of the highest responsibility, but he treated him as a friend whom he trusted. With all William's great generosity to enemies whom he respected, it is scarcely credible that he should have written to Godolphin the letters he did had he not been confident of his fidelity. William himself was once heard to declare that though he could profit by treason, he could never bear the traitor. If William was indeed conscious of Godolphin's guilt it would be impossible to reconcile his conduct with this sentiment, and of all the self-contradictory characters of the age that of William III. of England

[1] Additional MSS. 24905, f. 23, British Museum.

would have been the most enigmatical, crooked, and incomprehensible.

The Jacobite tendencies of Godolphin filled William with no apprehension, and appear to have given him no uneasiness. It was very different in regard to his conduct concerning the affairs of the Treasury. Here master and servant were in constant collision. A correspondence, unfortunately a very short one, which passed between William and Godolphin in the years 1691–93 still exists in the British Museum. Perhaps correspondence is hardly the word for a series of letters, which on the king's part contain little more than a constant demand for money, and on Godolphin's a remonstrance against giving it.

Godolphin, both directly in letters to the king and indirectly in letters to the king's secretary, Blathwayte, represented the difficulties into which the king was plunging. His letters unfortunately are few, but they are highly characteristic. They are short, manly, and straightforward ; there is no appearance of any of those circumlocutions or periphrases which courtiers adopt to avoid injuring the sensibilities of their sovereign. What he thought he said, and if he put his name to many things which he deemed wrong, he did so with a grumble, which was all that the most conscientious minister could do before resignation became the fashion, and when obedience was as much expected from a minister as advice.

But if the correspondence does not add much material to history, it at least brings the characters of

the two men into striking contrast. To William the necessity for money was apparent on every side. The alliance of which he was the presiding spirit was cemented together by nothing else. The army in Ireland required it, and was falling to pieces for want of it; secret services swallowed it in mountains, favourites absorbed it in oceans.[1] That the money was wanted, that great events depended upon its forthcoming, was enough for William. He expected to be supplied with it, as a soldier in an action expects to be supplied with powder and shot. The objects of his life were so large that their magnitude dwarfed the interests of the country over which he ruled; he swept the political horizon with his eyes to provide for the distant storm, he rarely cast them to his feet to examine the crazy, dangerous craft which bore him.

Godolphin's nature was a different one. Both character and circumstances led him carefully to calculate the cost of any object which he desired to acquire, before he proceeded to action. He never took a step without full assurance that he could stand where he planted his foot. In his leisure hours, it was said that he gambled. No statesman, probably, who has ever governed England displayed so little of the gambler in his public career, or left so few of his actions to chance. This innate determination to reconcile means and ends contributed largely to make him the great finance minister which he became. He could not save the country from debt, he could not

[1] In 1691 the vast sum of 279,000*l.* was spent in secret service.

induce his countrymen to refrain from undertakings for which they were unable to pay; but he could, and did, reduce such extravagance to a minimum, and he could, and did, convert financial confusion into a methodical order which greatly relieved the country and added immensely to its credit. Unlike William, Godolphin's eyes rarely strayed to the horizon; they were turned to the crazy bark on which he stood, and he saw, and told William, that it was sinking.

William was neither wilfully blind nor deaf. He was only careless and preoccupied. He entirely agreed with Godolphin in his gloomy vaticinations regarding money. 'I assure you,' he writes to Godolphin in August 1692, 'that I shrink as well as you ['que je shrink aussi bien que vous' is his curious expression in the original], when I consider the state in which the Treasury now is.'[1] Nevertheless, he took no measures to check the exorbitant calls upon it.

The offhand manner in which William treated the Treasury shows how great Godolphin's difficulties must have been in saving the wealth of the nation from the rapacity of the king. William's orders were no less diverse than peremptory. The Commissioners of the Treasury are immediately to pay 200*l.* to every battalion in Flanders for the purpose of buying and maintaining a waggon. His secretary has lost his horses, plate, and equipage in a voyage to the Low Countries; the Treasury must compensate him

[1] Additional MSS. 24905, f. 23, British Museum.

with 2,000*l.* The Duke of Schomberg's pay is to be increased.[1] The arrears due to the troops in Savoy are to be paid. Godolphin no doubt found the execution of the king's commands a very delicate task. Certain sums of money had been voted by Parliament for certain purposes, more could not be furnished without adding recklessly to the debt. 'I beg of you,' he writes to Blathwayte,[2] 'to represent to the king that the consequence of all this is loading his revenue with more anticipations and plunging it into [such ?] fresh engagements as he will be very sorry to see at his return, and not only [this ?] but the debt to his household and family is all this while increasing, by the necessity of applying all the money that can any way be borrowed to the extraordinary charges of the public.' In regard to the necessity of the expenses he had nothing to say. They might be necessary, or they might not. Their consequences, he affirmed, however, would be most inconvenient.[3]

The opinion of Godolphin as to the necessity of many great public expenses was so thinly disguised as to be quite transparent. His opinion as to incurring heavy expenses for individuals he did not disguise at all. He had already, early in 1690, shown unequivocal symptoms of revolt against the abominable practice which the sovereign exercised of making

[1] Additional MSS. 9735, British Museum. William to Godolphin, March 28 and April 3, 1692.

[2] July 5, 1692, Godolphin to Blathwayte. Additional MSS. 9735, British Museum.

[3] Godolphin to Blathwayte (no date). Additional MSS. 9735, British Museum.

summary orders upon the exchequer. The queen, the king being then abroad, desired him to sign papers placing the Lord President's pension for twenty-one years on the post office, and for paying the Lord Bath 16,000*l.* of arrears. Godolphin frankly stated in a letter to the king[1] how very unadvisable such transactions were; as to these particular ones he thought the objects bad, but, according to his almost invarable practice, he left the object as much as possible out of sight, and addressed himself to financial considerations. He warned the king that such proceedings could scarcely escape the secretary of the Commissioners of Accounts, whose powers were large and strained to the uttermost. He, however, obeyed the queen's order, and the reason he gives for doing so is a strange one. He was anxious, he said, to leave the king's service, but should like to do so with the king's permission rather than with the appearance of a breach. Thus, for the sake of appearances, he committed an act which he strongly condemned.

In the following year Godolphin repeated his remonstrances on a similar subject. The king had signed a warrant for paying Count de Solmes 14*l.* a day. Now the highest allowances ever made by a Government to a general had been 10*l.* a day. That was the amount received by the Duke of Schomberg, by the Duke of Monmouth, and by the Duke of Albemarle before him. There was no instance of a

[1] Dalrymple's *Memoirs*. Godolphin to William, March 13, 1690.

larger allowance on the Treasury books. Godolphin accordingly wrote to Blathwayte strongly urging him to induce the king to reconsider the warrant, or at all events to take the prudent course of placing upon the establishment a sum not exceeding 10*l.*[1] The 4*l.*, he said, might be credited to some other account. Perhaps the suggestion may savour rather of a device than a protest, but the proposal at all events testifies some respect for public decency.

The remonstrances of Godolphin passed unheeded. The king effected neither reform nor retrenchment, while, to make matters worse, as time passed on, the news from abroad became alarming. The years 1693 and 1694 were years of intense gloom in England. Every speech from the throne was a petition for money, or contained an announcement of a naval or military miscarriage. The charges for the war were boundless and continuous. Extravagant bounties to foreigners further swelled the gigantic total of expenditure; while treason and conspiracy, which were ever imminent, seemed all the more threatening because the rumours which announced them were intangible and undefined. In the House of Commons there existed a strong opposition to the court. Clarges, Foley, and many other members of influence and repute persistently attacked the Government for its prodigality, for its foreign policy, or for its corruption. England, they proclaimed, was handed over

[1] Additional MSS. 9735, British Museum. Godolphin to the king, July 22, 1692.

to the Dutch, or, to use an offensive nickname of the day, to the 'froglanders.' One of the plagues of Egypt they said had fallen upon the country; the croak of frogs was heard over all: in the dwellings of the king, in the chambers of Whitehall and St. James's, in the palaces of the hereditary monarchs of England.[1]

And if this was the state of affairs in England, matters abroad were even worse. On the Continent, the grand alliance was tottering. Spain was severely pressed by France; Barcelona, one of her most important towns, was threatened. Russell was sent out to avert the disaster; but Russell only filled England with miserable lamentations over the hardship which obliged him to spend more than six consecutive months at sea.[2] Never were the prospects of William darker. He was threatened at home and abroad by open violence, by secret insurrection, by the frailty of his instruments, by the machinations of his enemies. Sound advice was of all things essential to the welfare of his cause. Sound advice was forthcoming, but it came from a mouth the very last from which, if the report of such men as Bulkeley was true,

[1] Cobbett's *Parliamentary History*, vol. v. p. 850; March 24, 1694, speech by Sir John Knight.

[2] Russell's behaviour on this occasion, and his regret at being six months at sea, is worth comparing with an observation made by Nelson in his diary. Nelson on arriving at Gibraltar in 1805 writes: 'On the 20th (July) I went on shore for the first time since June 16, 1803, and from having my foot out of the *Victory* two years wanting ten days.' James's *Naval History*.

we should have been led to expect it, for it came from no other than Sidney Godolphin.

The state of parties, the state of the revenue, the state of the war, perhaps his own personal safety—his enemies had called him Judas because he carried the purse[1]—inclined Godolphin, in a letter of singular frankness and cynical worldliness, to represent to the king the dangers which surrounded him, and the means which should be taken to avoid them. He gave a sketch of the condition of parties, of the state of the revenue, and of the probable consequences of an eventuality then much discussed, a dissolution of Parliament. There is much in this curious letter which foreshadows the policy that he himself attempted to carry out in the following reign. The king's great difficulty, he declared, would be to manipulate the Whig and Tory parties, so as to maintain himself against his enemies abroad, and at the same time preserve his authority at home in a manner that would not deprive him of the services of either. The task, he freely admitted, was a difficult one ; the Tories were so mixed up with the Jacobites that to trust them during the war would be dangerous. The disaffection of the Tories threw the whole government upon the Whigs. But this was also a source of danger, as the Whigs were inspired by opinions hostile to the authority of the king. They were quite prepared to vote any supply to keep James out of England, but not a sixpence would ever be wrung

[1] Cobbett's *Parliamentary History*, vol. v. p. 777.

from them to support the just rights of the king against what Godolphin sneeringly remarks they are pleased to call the interests of the people.

Godolphin strongly urged the king to conclude a peace during the summer. The king's expenses he said were far outrunning his means of defraying them. His revenues were already pledged to the hilt; he would soon be absolutely at the mercy of the House of Commons, and neither peace nor happiness would ever be the lot of an English king who had yearly to petition Parliament for a million of money for his common and necessary support. The king thought that a new Parliament might liberate him from his difficulties. This, in Godolphin's opinion, was a mistake. Another Parliament, however friendly it might be, would have no other way of giving than had its predecessor. Whatever revenues of the king remained uncharged would speedily be burthened, as men, he cynically observed, infinitely prefer mortgaging the revenues of the Crown to encumbering their own land. 'As to this Parliament,' Godolphin continues to William, 'it seems to be unquestionably your interest, if the war continue, to continue the Parliament; and if the war ends, to let that end with it, and my reasons for this opinion are:

'(1) These are the same men that engaged your majesty in the war, and are obliged by their votes to support you in it.

'(2) The experience you have that this house will do it, ought to be an unanswerable argument against

parting with it, for a new one, when you do not know whether they will be for you or not.

'(3) The great reason that's given for dissolving this, being because it's said they have an ill reputation, ought not to sway in this affair, but the contrary; since that is only a scandal raised by the enemies of the government; and supporting your majesty being the crime they lay to their charge, your majesty's friends ought to esteem them for that for which they are hated by their enemies.

'(4) Your Majesty has for this four years last past been giving all employments to members of the House which, though it has not signified much in any party business, yet in the grand affair of carrying on the war, they have been of mighty service; for there is but very few instances of any of them, but which upon occasion appear to be hearty for your government, in relation to the foreign dispute, and many of these will be left out in a new choice, which will be no small prejudice to your majesty, considering that most of your enemies in the House of Commons are made so because they have not places like the rest.

'But what's the most dangerous consequence of a new election is, that it will throw the ballance too much on the one side or the other; for either the Whigs will according to their expectation, get it into their hands entirely, and then I fear your Majesty will think the impositions they'll be laying upon you unreasonable; or otherwise the Tories will have the

ascendent, and then it's to be doubted that they in revenge to the Whigs, will, for the major part, be governed by the artifices of the Jacobites, and from such a misfortune nothing less than destruction can proceed.

'Whereas, as the house is now constituted, the Whigs are not strong enough to make use of the necessities of your government as much as they are inclined to do; neither are the Torys numerous enough to resent your majesty's favoring the Whigs. Sir, upon the whole I shall presume to conclude as I began, that the parliament that begun with the war, should likewise end with it and not before.

'And if it pleased God to grant your majesty an honorable peace, and you would then be pleased to set up for a party of your own, and let all people see that if they expected your favour they must depend upon you for it, and not let anyone hope for promotion for being true to a faction, but by serving you; I presume to say that the war being ended, a new parliament called, and such measures pursued, your majesty would quickly find that the Jacobites would turn moderate churchmen, and loyal subjects, and the Whigs much more obsequious courtiers and easier servants than now they are.' [1]

The king could hardly have received better or, at all events, more worldly counsel, nor could words more clearly establish Godolphin's own position in reference to parties. Had he lived a few genera-

[1] Dalrymple's *Memoirs*, vol. ii. pt. ii. b. i. app. p. 32.

tions later he would have been called 'a king's friend,' though of the clique of scheming and interested men who surrounded George III. there was, perhaps, not one who could have given his sovereign advice at once so prudent and statesmanlike. Such arguments were, however, not likely to make him a favourite with either the Whig or Tory party. Neither Whig nor Tory was likely to appreciate a policy which was coldly calculated to wear out one against the other, and which was finally to substitute for both a royal bodyguard of mercenary politicians. Godolphin regarded Whigs and Tories with impartial disdain. In his opinion avarice and disappointment ruled their conduct. Those of them who were enemies were enemies because there was not enough money or enough places to purchase their friendship; those who were friends were friends only because their adhesion had been gained by gold.

The cynical views of Godolphin were hardly likely to make him popular, as men aspire to have credit for virtue even when they know that they do not possess it. Thus the attacks upon him in the House of Commons became violent and frequent. His position as First Commissioner of the Treasury, the fountain head, as it were, from which the stream of patronage flowed, rendered him liable to bitter assaults not only from those who were conscientiously opposed to his politics, but from those who had solicited him for honours or preferment and been denied. In the extravagant manner of this and

the ensuing century—a manner affected by Burke no less than by Clarges—Scripture was ransacked to furnish a fitting illustration of his iniquities, and the so-called treason of ministers was compared to the betrayal of our Lord. 'We have some resemblance,' said Clarges, 'to the first Christians, who were twelve apostles, and one of them was a devil; he kept the purse; for thirty pieces of silver he betrayed his master.' Such language to modern ears sounds almost blasphemous; it becomes remarkable when we reflect that the Commons of that day pressed few topics on the king more strenuously than the necessity of putting an end to 'prophaneness.'

The advice which Godolphin gave to William was excellent; it is alleged that this very same year he offered advice no less excellent to James. We decline to believe the allegation, as to believe it seems to us to be tantamount to believing in two absolutely contradictory propositions.

A story is somewhere related in fairy lore of a prince, over whom had been flung a subtle spell of witchcraft. During the particular periods of its influence his virtues, which were naturally noble, were transformed into the most brutish vices, totally at variance with his disposition. His friends, his places of resort, in fact everything about him except his own person, changed during the special hours of the day or night when he was subject to the control of the enchantment. The story is pretty, and is not without its moral, but it ranks with such tales as

Beauty and the Beast, and affords us amusement while it wisely refrains from taxing our credulity. Godolphin's political transformations are scarcely less incredible if we credit the numberless reports which exist concerning his connection with the Jacobites; the contradictions of his conduct are inexplicable; his hypocrisy that of a demon rather than of a human being. At one moment he bows before his Majesty at Kensington, and speaks of the exile at St. Germains; at another, he salutes his Majesty at St. Germains, and plans the destruction of the Prince of Orange in London. He fortified William with counsel which was artfully calculated to keep him on the throne; he inspired James with designs which had no object but to fling William from it. Floyd, a Jacobite agent, in a curious letter to James written in the spring of 1694, assured his master that, amidst professions of the profoundest loyalty, Godolphin suggested that, if the war did not end in the approaching summer, James should invade England with a large French army, and that he added to this pernicious advice the treason of betraying the intention of the English to invade Brest.[1] That Godolphin should have served either William or James with the best advice at his command is intelligible; but it is difficult to believe that he was at the same time the best adviser of both, that his treason was so impartial that, like a man who plays some game against himself, he was for ever

[1] Macpherson's *Original Papers.*

engaged in trying to frustrate his own plans and counteract his own moves. Godolphin could not act like some careless onlooker of a game, who offers his honest opinion first on one side and then on the other. He was very deeply interested in the result himself, quite as much so in his own degree as either William or James.

Thus, as history offers two versions of Godolphin's conduct, we can take our choice as to which we shall believe, but we cannot believe both. If we are told that such and such a man is doing such and such a thing at such and such a time, and somebody else tells us that he is doing something quite different, we conclude at once that one of our informants is mistaken, and not that the person alluded to was doing two opposite things at the same moment. So it is with Godolphin. He may have given excellent advice to either James or William. He certainly did not give it to both. The proof that Godolphin during this year gave advice of a very admirable character to William can scarcely be successfully disputed. Floyd's accusation against him, on the other hand, rests entirely on his own authority. We have no means of testing it. We know nothing of his reputation for veracity. Moreover, the Jacobite reports of the condition of England in the year 1694 vary profoundly, and therefore cast doubts upon their own accuracy. According to Floyd, England, in the spring of 1694, was prepared to receive James with enthusiasm. In the summer James received intelligence of a very

different kind from another agent. He was told that his cause was desperate, that the common people of England were venomous, that the magistrates in the towns were malignant, that distrust of himself was universal, that the thousand stories which were poured into his ears of the Protestants who were panting to join his standard were the idlest tales.[1] Floyd had asserted that the secret of the expedition against Brest was betrayed by Godolphin and Marlborough. According to Rapin it was the talk of the town quite a month before it took place. This is the evidence, slight and conflicting, mixed up with common rumour and common gossip, which alone exists to confront the living testimony of Godolphin's own letters, and the proofs of confidence which William in nearly every page of his correspondence furnishes in favour of his accused minister. Posterity must form its own opinion as to the value of evidence so directly opposed.

In 1695 Godolphin's name became associated with an institution which was destined to a magnificent and beneficent future. William III., adopting the wishes of Queen Mary, decided upon converting Greenwich Palace into a hospital for worn-out seamen. Wren was called on to enlarge and embellish the palace, and a subscription list was opened for its benefit upon which the names of the king and the chief nobility were immediately placed. The post of treasurer to the new hospital was one of some emolu-

[1] Macpherson's *Original Papers*, August 1694.

ment, and probably also of some influence. A man of taste who resided near the spot, who was competent to advise, and who had sufficient authority to direct, would no doubt be an invaluable acquisition to the formidable board of peers and Privy Councillors which composed the commission for endowing and inaugurating the work. Godolphin thought of his old friend Evelyn, and on February 17 offered him the appointment of Treasurer of the Hospital. The post, as it turned out, was probably one of more honour than value, as two years later Evelyn complained that he had not received one penny of his salary. Towards this great benefaction Godolphin subscribed two hundred pounds. Others had put down their names for larger sums, but Godolphin was the first of the subscribers who actually paid in his subscription. For more than a century and a half this noble fabric continued to serve the purpose for which it was projected; it afforded a splendid asylum for those who had fought under Rooke, under Hawke, under Nelson, and under Napier, who had shared the fatigues of Anson's voyage round the world, or had braved the cold and darkness of Ross's expedition to the Arctic regions; for its original purpose it has now ceased to exist, but the memories which cling to its past will clothe it with an interest more abiding and attractive than the architecture of Wren, the decorations of Thornhill, or the inspired masterpieces of Lely and Vandyck.

The following year, 1696, was pregnant with

events affecting Godolphin's future. Before half of it had elapsed he found himself involved in a serious charge of treason.

The abortive conspiracy of Sir John Fenwick to assassinate William III., in which Godolphin's name is unfortunately mixed, administered a shock to society due entirely to the abominable crime which its authors contemplated. A mere conspiracy to put James on the throne and William off it, would have excited, at that time, no very great attention, and certainly no general reprobation ; the people were accustomed to social convulsions ; only within the last few years a rebellion had been brought to a successful issue ; rebellions were still the talk of both town and country ; the shadow of future rebellion clouded the otherwise peaceful prospects of the nation. So great, indeed, was the popular demoralisation that there were Englishmen who would have rapturously welcomed to English shores armies of foreigners in support of their favourite cause, and would have beheld with exultation a revolution which was purely English perish from the violence of a *coup d'état* which was almost purely French. But with all their great culpability there were few Jacobites who did not shrink from the name of assassination, who did not blush to think that what they deemed an honourable struggle was degraded to the level of a base, vulgar, and criminal conspiracy. Whatever was chivalrous or noble—and perhaps no cause has in modern times inspired so much chivalry as that of the

Stewarts—vanished at the first rumour of Fenwick's plot. A great change in the popular sentiment was immediately manifested. The nation had undoubtedly been out of humour with William : it had been offended by his affection for the Dutch ; it had been affronted by his coldness to the English. Now every symptom of enmity disappeared in the common triumph that so shameful, so detestable, a crime had been frustrated. The nation did not love William, but had he been the most beloved monarch that was ever worshipped by a devoted people, they could hardly have evinced a more loyal interest in his defence. The House of Lords, the House of Commons, the clergy, the people entered everywhere into associations for his protection, and, for the first time perhaps since William's accession, the affections of his subjects were unanimously centred in his person.

We do not propose to give here any lengthened account of an event which is familiar to every reader of English history. The discovery of Fenwick's conspiracy was made known to Parliament by William in a speech from the Throne on February 24. Fenwick himself was not arrested till the following June. The king was then absent on the continent, having left the government in the hands of Lords Justices, among whom was Godolphin. Fenwick attempted to purchase his own life by making disclosures to William and to the House of Commons. He declared that Shrewsbury, Marlborough, Godolphin, and Russell were reconciled to James ; that they had sought and

received pardons from him ; that they were, in fact, traitors. Godolphin, upon a suitable opportunity, indignantly repudiated the charge in the House of Lords. It was true, he stated, that he had remained loyal to James up to the moment of his abdication, it was no doubt possible that, in consequence, James may have attributed to him more friendly sentiments than he in fact possessed ; but he absolutely denied ever having planned any manner of treason against William.[1] But before Godolphin had made this declaration the king and the Parliament had already decided that Fenwick's accusations were calumnies. The House of Commons in those days was never mealy-mouthed in expressing opinions which it had once formed ; it voted the charges false and scandalous. Nevertheless they had the effect of greatly damaging the characters of both Godolphin and Shrewsbury. Godolphin retired from the Government, while Shrewsbury was only prevented from doing so by the prayers of the king and his party. Godolphin's resignation has been attributed to a cause injurious to himself. It has been interpreted either as a confession of guilt on his own part or a suspicion of it on the part of the king. We think it was neither one nor the other, but that it resulted from party intrigue acting upon the mind of a man who lacked confidence in the political security of his position. His colleagues disliked and desired to undermine him, and they therefore constructed a trap which was

[1] Shrewsbury's *Correspondence*, December 1–11, 1696.

skilfully and successfully contrived to secure his fall.

The position of Godolphin in the Government in the year 1696 was indeed a peculiar one, and must have been no less irksome to himself than exasperating to his enemies. He as a Tory had no proper place in an administration which was daily growing more Whig. He certainly felt no cordiality towards his colleagues, and his frequent requests to the king to permit him to retire make it extremely likely that he was finally no unwilling victim of a plot which was certainly constructed for his injury. Had it not been, however, for the machinations of the Whigs, he would probably have clung to office with the hesitating grasp which marked the conduct of Shrewsbury. But between Shrewsbury and Godolphin there was a great gulf fixed—the impassable division between Whig and Tory. The Whigs hated Godolphin as much as they idolised their own amiable but feeble Shrewsbury. To them Godolphin was one of those who had more or less steeped himself in the iniquities of the last reign, one of those whom the great wave of revolution was designed to overwhelm, one of those who had risen upon its crest and found undeserved honours in its violence. For Godolphin, and politicians like Godolphin, the Whigs entertained no sympathy, and they would accept of no excuse.

The division between Whig and Tory was broad, and the natural antipathy of the parties was great, but between Godolphin and the Whigs there was a

separation broader than the ordinary distance between parties, and an aversion, on one side at least, greater than that which, as a rule, inspires the breasts of political opponents. Godolphin had not only been the minister of the late king, but in the opinion of the Whigs the character of his services had been disgraceful. The actions of the servant of James and of the colleague of Jeffreys had been of a nature to render it impossible for the Whigs to reconcile them with any regard to public liberty; and thus in the reign of William they could not condone his delinquencies. They might forget or forgive a correspondence with James when he became a fugitive. To such an extent their own great leader Shrewsbury was reported to have sinned. To such an extent, and even to a greater extent still, to the extent of betraying the fleet under his command, was Russell, the great apostle of Whiggism, the brother of the murdered Russell, the subject of accusation. But the Whigs very properly drew a distinction between these great crimes and the crimes which had been committed by the servants of James. The motive which inspired Russell to commit treason against William was very different from that which had once actuated Sunderland and Godolphin when, at the command of James II., they consented to sell the interests of England to France. The same obstinate, somewhat mutinous independence which engaged Russell against James would have engaged him against any ruler who happened to be on the throne.

It was the spirit of independence, very ill regulated no doubt, which had diverted Russell from his allegiance to James and induced him to bestow it upon William, which diverted it from William to offer it again to James. Russell could not have served James as Sunderland and Godolphin had served him, or as they might both, as far as any moral scruple was concerned, have perhaps served William. Russell regarded the king with that jealousy of supreme authority which is inseparable from democratic thought. Sunderland and Godolphin, with the calculating eyes of worldly men, contemplated the personal advantages and disadvantages which adherence to his cause might bring to themselves. There was between them the whole breadth of the distinction between a political and personal motive; one meditated treason against the king on behalf of the people, the others meditated treason against king and people alike for the achievement of a personal end. The Whigs understood all this, and were prepared, therefore, to make great allowances in their judgment of some men—allowances which were certainly in their own favour, but not on that account altogether unjust—while they firmly refused a pardon to others. In this determination they were inexorable—inexorable to the degree of harshness. It was in vain that Sunderland declared himself a Whig, that he schemed to reconcile the Whig party to the king, that he laboured to compose its factions and its differences; he always remained an outcast from its ranks, and failed

ignominiously to win the smallest particle of its confidence. Equally in vain was it in 1696 to expect that the Whigs had forgotten that Godolphin too had served the tyrant, that he had voted for a regency, that he was still the reputed partisan of James, and that remembering these things they should not have attempted his expulsion from office, and determined that at length he should make atonement for his past offences.

At the time of Fenwick's conspiracy more than six years had elapsed since the accession of William to the throne of England, but there was as yet no diminution in the hostility which the Whigs bore to the ministers of the late king. They were still hungry for revenge, and still their vengeance was delayed. The dislike of the king to rely on either party alone had hitherto prevented the existence of a solid Whig Government, and had greatly straitened the Whig power; but in 1696 the administration was more decisively Whig than it had ever been before, and the Whigs waited with impatience for an opportunity to rid themselves of any that remained of their obnoxious Tory colleagues. Fenwick's accusations against Godolphin and Marlborough offered the opportunity they desired; unfortunately the evidence against them was lacking in strength. But this difficulty was not insurmountable, and Monmouth, afterwards the celebrated Lord Peterborough, to his own everlasting disgrace attempted to supply the deficiency and ruin his old colleague Godolphin.

With this object in view, Monmouth attempted to extort from Fenwick fresh evidence against Godolphin and Marlborough, and promised as the price of compliance to do what he could to protect him. To a prisoner in Fenwick's position such an offer amounted to no more nor less than a bribe ; nor was Monmouth contented with instigating revelations which he hoped would be injurious to Godolphin ; he actually prompted Fenwick as to what he should say. A correspondence between Godolphin and James and Mary of Modena was supposed to exist. The proof of it lay in the king's hands. The king was to be catechised as to his knowledge of it. It does not appear that Monmouth had any fresh evidence on the subject ; it was a hunt after evidence, rather than an accusation based upon evidence. This miserable conspiracy, for it deserves no better name, came to nothing, and its author finally found his way to the Tower. Nothing can prove more clearly how unsubstantial the charges against Godolphin were than that his enemies had to resort to such discreditable expedients to ruin him. The attacks did him but little harm even at the time, and must for ever continue a lasting monument of the party rancour of the seventeenth century.

Thus the attempt to ruin Godolphin, whether by the unworthy methods employed by Monmouth or by the open assaults of party warfare, failed, and his enemies had to resort to new modes of attack. It occurred to them that they might attain

their object, by working upon the king, and upon Godolphin's natural sensitiveness of character. The accusations against Shrewsbury and Godolphin were in reality very similar, but an offence may sometimes be accounted great or small, criminal or the reverse, according to the manner in which it is regarded by those who have the power in their hands to inflict punishment. The sound, the unanswerable reasoning, which Somers and Russell employed to keep Shrewsbury in the Government, may, we can easily imagine, have been exchanged for arguments of another kind when they wished to drive Godolphin out of it. When they wrote to Shrewsbury it was to enjoin him to consult his own honour, to offer him every expression of good-will and affection. What they said or wrote to Godolphin we have no means of knowing, but it is not difficult to conjecture that there was more stress laid upon safety than upon honour, and nothing said at all about affection.

So the Whigs turned towards the king, and the course which they adopted, if it was less public, was perhaps more certain in its results than accusations in Parliament. Sunderland, the most artful of schemers, was the tool chiefly employed to undermine his ancient colleague. The occupation was not a new one. For some time he had been using his great credit with William to obtain the removal of Godolphin from office. So far the king had been obdurate. But now Fenwick's discoveries, or pretended discoveries, furnished Sunderland with a fresh handle

for intrigue. The lever was such a one as he never had before, as he was never likely to have again, and the Whigs with whom he now desired to enlist, and whom he now served in the vain hope that they would some day forget that he also had served James, were determined that he should work it with all his energy. It was bad enough for them that the Tories should have thus far escaped so promising an opportunity of attack; but it would be ten times worse if any confusion in the public mind should confound their own misdeeds with those of their adversaries; it was absolutely necessary for their own reputation that some distinction should be publicly made between a Whig who was accused of treason, and a Tory under the same charge. Thus Sunderland laboured for the overthrow of Godolphin as a man who strives to make expiation for a great offence, and on the last day of October it was triumphantly announced that Godolphin was no longer a member of the Government.

Godolphin was driven from office, but it is difficult, in spite of the gracious distinction which the king was thus asserted to have made in favour of the accused Whigs, to see any great mark of his displeasure towards Godolphin. A minister who vacates office owing to a charge of treason would hardly be allowed to resign. Dismissal would more clearly signify the king's anger. Nor does the language of the Whig chiefs among themselves at all bear out the assumption that the king had specially marked out Godolphin for punishment. 'Give me

leave to say,' writes Somers to Shrewsbury,' that my Lord Godolphin is directly tricked in this matter, and has suffered himself to be cozened into an offer to lay down, and is surprised at having his offer accepted.'[1] Wharton, ten days later, writes in much the same strain. 'I am apt to think there never was more management than in bringing it about.'[2] This language shows us clearly enough that Godolphin's resignation was voluntary, and that it had been procured by the machinations of those who wished to get rid of him. That the king stooped to dealings of such a nature is improbable, both from his position and character; they bear the ineffaceable stamp of Sunderland's genius. The part which the king actually took in the affair, and the part which it was intended people should think he had taken, is manifest. Godolphin's resignation of office, with Shrewsbury's continuance in it, was desired by the Whig leaders for the purpose of instilling into the public mind the impression that in the opinion of the king the Whig chiefs were not guilty of an offence for which he had to dismiss their Tory colleague. Their anxiety was very great that Godolphin's resignation should appear to be the work of the king; and even between themselves they attempted, though unsuccessfully, to keep up the illusion. But the king in

[1] Shrewsbury's *Correspondence*, $\frac{\text{October } 31}{\text{November } 10}$, 1696, p. 419. Lord Keeper Somers to the Duke of Shrewsbury.

[2] Shrewsbury's *Correspondence*, p. 428. Lord Wharton to the Duke of Shrewsbury, November $\frac{10}{20}$, 1696.

reality did not dismiss Godolphin at all, and was probably quite unconscious that he was acting in a comedy got up for the amusement of the public, and for the benefit of the Whig party. The intrigue was a triumph of Sunderland's art, it was far beneath the dignity of so eminent a statesman and so excellent a man as Somers.

Thus Fenwick's plot put an end for a time to Godolphin's official career. But Godolphin had not yet done with Fenwick. It soon became his duty to sit in judgment upon a man whose reckless and wicked conduct had wrought him so much injury. The king and Parliament had determined that Fenwick should be brought to justice. The ordinary forms of law could not be employed; witnesses had been tampered with, of the two witnesses which the law of England required to prove a charge of treason only one could be produced, the other having been persuaded to fly from the country, and thus sufficient evidence was not forthcoming. It was clear that if no extraordinary step was taken, Fenwick must escape. It was decided to bring in a bill of attainder. The bill passed the House of Commons; in the House of Lords it met with strong opposition. It was monstrous, it was argued, to propose a measure of so arbitrary, of so unconstitutional a spirit against so insignificant a man as Fenwick; if the common methods of justice were ever to be overridden, let it be in the case of some great and dangerous enemy to the public peace. The manner of inflicting punish-

ment, the departure from the law affecting evidence in cases of treason, the description of evidence, the whole procedure, in short, were, it was urged, all equally objectionable. The bill came on for a second reading. Godolphin voted against it. Before the third reading opposition had waxed in strength and determination. The debate was protracted far into the shades of a December evening; it was not till between seven and eight that the division was called; it was not till nine that its excitement and formalities released the weary members from their attendance. The bill had been carried by seven votes only. Godolphin had again given his voice against it. All the Lords Justices present (except the Archbishop of Canterbury) had joined him; while many great Lords, such as Ormond and Somerset, who had supported the second reading, now opposed the third reading. A protest was signed and placed upon the Journals of the House of Lords, but the name of Godolphin, earnestly as he had opposed the bill, is not to be found among the signatures.

The conduct of Godolphin on this occasion creates a strong presumption that he had no connection with Fenwick's plot, or even with the other Jacobite intrigues of that period. Had Fenwick's charges been true, or had the general suspicion of Godolphin's loyalty amounted to a moral conviction of his treason, and had William dismissed him from office on one account or the other, Godolphin could

not without the most brazen effrontery and the gravest peril have lent himself to the defence of a person who in fact accused him of being accessory to his own crime. A man in the position of Godolphin accused or suspected of treason, and anxious to escape the charge, would naturally display his innocence by an active prosecution of the traitor, or at the very least by an assumption of indifference and neutrality. Godolphin did the very contrary. The most foolish thing which a man in such circumstances could do would be to excite the animosity of a king who it was popularly supposed held evidence which might hang him. This again Godolphin did. It has been stated that the king was not anxious to promote a bill of attainder against Fenwick, and that therefore Godolphin's opposition was not regarded with displeasure by the court. Both William's behaviour at the time and after it discredits this statement. All his friends voted for the bill, the Bishop of Salisbury, Portland, Sydney, and many others of his closest adherents; nearly all those who voted against it were made sooner or later to feel the weight of his resentment. To the end of William's reign they never recovered his confidence; they would have done as much, the king said, as Sir John Fenwick if they durst. The utmost that can be made of the charge against Godolphin may, we think, be summed up in the king's words; he might have been disloyal 'if he durst,' and even this assumption we are not prepared to admit. Nor could the king's reproach

have been intended for Godolphin, for he was not one whom William persistently banished from office. On the contrary, a few years later, it was the king who solicited Godolphin to serve him, and Godolphin who was reluctant to do so.[1]

The retirement of Godolphin from the Treasury in 1696 seems the proper place to say one or two words in regard to the great financial measures which were passed during his occupation of office.

The Tonnage Bill from which sprang the Bank of England, the Recoinage Bill which effected the restoration of public credit, are acts which mark epochs in the history of English finance. To enter into any description of these measures would be superfluous; they are admirably explained by Lord Macaulay, and are generally understood by educated people of the present day; it is the authorship of the Acts of which we desire to speak, and which should deservedly render the man who framed them famous. The

[1] An argument against the charge of treason so resolutely brought against Godolphin at this time is to be discovered, we think, in the letter which Sir J. Fenwick wrote to his wife, Lady Mary Fenwick, immediately upon his apprehension. In this he tells her what men of influence she should try and gain, and enumerates Keppel, Portland, and Godolphin; Godolphin, Fenwick thinks, may be influenced by Lady Montgomery, Keppel and Portland by Lords Selkirk and Carlisle. Now it seems to us somewhat strange that if Godolphin was in fact an adherent of James II. the same methods should have been required to procure his interest as that of two men who were well known to be the warmest friends of William. Moreover, it is also very improbable that Godolphin, had he been an active Jacobite, should have incurred a risk out of friendship for Lady Montgomery which he was not prepared to incur for the exiled king, to whom he would naturally look for reward.

entire credit of these great reforms has hitherto been conferred upon Montague; that Montague was an able and deserving statesman is indisputable, but we think that the praise so lavishly poured upon him should have been more generously and widely distributed. The bills must certainly have received the careful study and approval of Godolphin.

Godolphin was the head of the department in which Montague was Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the office of First Commissioner of the Treasury carried with it in the reign of William III. the full obligation of departmental administration. In the present age the First Lord of the Treasury is usually Prime Minister, two hundred years ago he was merely a departmental chief. Godolphin's great reputation particularly depended on his skill at the Treasury board; he was selected as the head of the Treasury board by one sovereign after another almost apart from any other consideration. It seems therefore most improbable that bills vitally affecting his department should not to a great extent have been the result of his experience and ability.

It is however perfectly true that the name of Montague is connected with these reforms in a way in which that of Godolphin is not. The reason is not far to seek. The bills were money bills. They all emanated from the House of Commons, and the House of Commons was in the reign of William III. peculiarly sensitive to the interference of the House of Lords in regard to money. Godolphin, had he been

so minded, could scarcely have taken any active part in the introduction of these bills. When they came to the Upper House, he had them—as appears from the Journals of the House of Lords—under his charge, which was the only possible public connection which he could have with them. Nor is it rational to suppose that because Montague was the exponent of a policy in Parliament he was necessarily the author of the policy as well. Indeed, it is stated that the plan for the recoinage of the silver was the work of Sir Isaac Newton,[1] and that Montague followed his directions ; while as to exchequer bills, the introduction of which has also been ascribed to Montague, Shrewsbury tells us that in June 1696 the Lords of the Treasury were employing all possible methods to establish them. Shrewsbury does not distinguish between the action of the man and the action of the Board ; and it would be well, perhaps, if his example had been more widely followed.

Two years after the proceedings on Fenwick's conspiracy, an event occurred which probably had great influence on Godolphin's future. In 1698 his only son Francis married Henrietta Churchill,[2] Marlborough's eldest daughter. The bridegroom was only

[1] Francis's *History of the Bank of England.*

[2] Lady Henrietta Godolphin is thus mentioned in a contemporary poem called the 'Toasters' :

> 'Godolphin's easy and unpractis'd air,
> Gains without art, and governs without care.
> Her conqu'ring race with various fate surprise ;
> Who 'scape their arms, are captives to their eyes.'

twenty years old, the bride was but eighteen. The match it was said was a love match; Lord and Lady Marlborough had determined not to force the inclinations of their daughters. Such a delicacy was somewhat unusual at the time, and seems inconsistent with the characters of two persons who united between them in a very marked degree the qualities of pride, ambition, and avarice. Perhaps they considered that daughters whose preferences inclined them to such creditable matches as the eldest sons of Lord Godolphin and Lord Sunderland, might be trusted to look after themselves without the interposition of parental authority. The marriage was hailed on all sides with joy. According to the notions of the age the young couple would be but poor. Godolphin had but little money to spare; he had laboured long and faithfully at the public finances without amassing wealth. Marlborough's fortune was yet in its infancy, and he had several daughters to provide for. Five thousand pounds was the largest sum he was able to settle on the bride. Princess Anne, extravagantly liberal where her affections were touched, wished to endow her with a sum of ten thousand pounds. Lady Marlborough, with a moderation which her whole history shows was absolutely foreign to her character, declined to accept so magnificent a present. The half of it indeed she was prevailed upon to take. For the rest she returned her dutiful thanks.

This alliance proved highly beneficial both to

Godolphin and Marlborough in future years, for it bound two men together who could never have fulfilled their highest destiny by following separate paths. Each to a great extent supplied what the other wanted. It is doubtful whether Marlborough would have been so successful abroad had he not been able to rely upon the wise and prudent friend whom he left at the head of the Government in England. Indeed it is said, and probably with truth, that in the commencement of the next reign he determined to refuse the conduct of the war unless Godolphin was placed in charge of the Treasury. It is certain that Godolphin would never have taken so prominent a position in politics had it not been for the active talents of Marlborough, and for the romantic friendship which existed between the duchess and the queen. The stars of these two great men rose, culminated, and set together; they illuminated the same heaven and suffered the same eclipses. Thus the marriage between Francis Godolphin and Henrietta Churchill was profoundly calculated to augment the prosperity of the parents. Grandchildren alone were wanted to complete their fortune, and children, it appeared, were to bless the union. In February 1699 Lady Henrietta was delivered unexpectedly of a boy. Had fate doomed the new-born infant to a chequered and turbulent career, his biographer might have discovered at his birth many ominous presages of his future life. The letter which announces the nativity of Godolphin's grandson and Marlborough's heir announces

the occurrence of a furious and destructive tempest. Trees were blown down, tiles stript off the roofs, and several people were killed.[1]

During the last few years of William's reign but the faintest traces are left of Godolphin's public life. In 1698 an East India Bill was passed through Parliament, through the efforts of the Whigs, but mostly through the exertions of Montague. Its object was to create a new East India Company by the side of the old one, and the measure has been praised as one of Montague's legislative masterpieces. We see nothing to praise about it. It was to a large extent an attempt to extort money to supply the necessities of the Government, and it proposed to accomplish this end by putting up the East India trade to auction. It introduced no new and beneficial principle into our commercial system, and perpetuated much which was bad. The exclusive trading of the old East India Company had been the cause of boundless mischief and of innumerable complaints, but Montague's bill instead of abolishing all monopoly, merely created a new one. Trade had hitherto been crushed by one oppressor, it was now to be smothered by two; while to make matters worse the monopolists disturbed the peace of every quarter of the globe where they came into contact. This mischievous bill Godolphin opposed, and he also signed a protest against the tack by which the

[1] Letter (without signature) from Althorpe to Mrs. Boscawen, February 7, $\frac{1698}{1699}$. Additional MSS. British Museum, 15949, f. 31.

Commons endeavoured to ensure its passage through the House of Lords; but there is nothing to distinguish his action, on this occasion, from that of his political associates; and there is no appearance whatever that those who opposed Montague took a more enlightened view of the principles of trade than did Montague himself.

As the century drew to a conclusion Godolphin once more became conspicuous. The elections of 1698 had been very adverse to the Whigs, and their power, which had seemed securely established, began rapidly to decline; first one Whig minister, then another, fell and was replaced by a Tory. At length in 1700 the king sought to make Godolphin First Commissioner of his Treasury. Godolphin at first declined to accept office, but he finally yielded to the pressure of the king, and in November was once more installed at his old post at the Exchequer. The event surprised no one. 'It will be no news to you,' writes Charles Trelawny on November 7, 'that Lord Godolphin will be at the head of the Treasury;' and after referring to the rumour of an approaching dissolution of Parliament he goes on to say, 'My lord, I, and the brigadier hath put our heads together more than once about it, and we find no way so sure, as to have Mr. Godolphin chosen for the county, and you to come in at Helston; would my lord Godolphin but let his son appear for the county, I will wager my head he shall be chosen by the unanimous consent

of the gentlemen, a few canting rogues excepted.'[1] Godolphin had clearly consolidated power in his native county since those days, thirty-two years ago, when he had so carefully but so doubtfully laid his plans for being elected member for Helston.

Godolphin's term of office was on this occasion destined to endure only for a few months, as he was hardly installed at the Treasury before he again surrendered his post. Like all his resignations during William's reign, there is some mystery about it, and various explanations of it. It was said that he was dismissed for opposing the war which the king wished to make upon France. It is also stated that he resigned office under William in the expectation that Anne, in the event of William's death, would appoint him Lord High Treasurer.

There seems to us to be no clear evidence that Godolphin resigned office because he was opposed to a war with France. The Tory party, it is true, objected to war, but on this point, in the following reign, and from the very commencement of it, Godolphin was in constant antagonism to his party. It has been urged that his reluctance to engage in hostilities was ultimately overcome by a promise made by Queen Anne that the Duke of Marlborough should be appointed commander in-chief. It was, however, frequently affirmed and widely believed that William shortly before his death had

[1] Charles Trelawny to Colonel Godolphin, Governor of Scilly. Additional MSS. British Museum, 28052, f. 100.

recommended Anne to appoint Marlborough commander-in-chief as the most efficient officer in his service. Under these circumstances, and from the probability that the infirmities of the king would prevent him from ever again taking command in the field himself, there was every prospect, even had the war broken out in William's reign, that Marlborough would have had the chief command, and thus the inducement which it was said was sufficient to persuade Godolphin to take office under Queen Anne should have been sufficient to keep him in it under her predecessor.

The second allegation, that Godolphin resigned office under William that upon the king's death he might be appointed Lord High Treasurer by Anne, is equally improbable. When Godolphin resigned, it was impossible to foretell how long William might yet live, and, as it happened, he only died when he did in consequence of an accident, an event quite beyond the limits of human calculation or powers of prediction ; nor, further, does there appear any sort of reason why the fact of Godolphin being First Commissioner of the Treasury to William should preclude his being Lord High Treasurer to Anne.

We believe that a combination of reasons—reluctance to serve in the Government at all, the embarrassment which the Tory administration had brought upon the king, and his own relations to the Princess Anne—probably induced Godolphin to quit office.

Godolphin evidently did not wish to assume office

in 1700. He had declined it, but the king had forced it upon him. Throughout his connection with William's governments he never appeared ambitious of office and was always anxious to leave it. There is nothing, indeed, to show that he was on bad terms with William, but he was on a much more friendly footing with Anne, and his friendship for Anne undoubtedly, to a certain extent, affords a plausible explanation for his disinclination to serve William.

The connection between Godolphin and the Princess Anne was already, in 1701, of old date. From almost the moment of William's accession to the throne, Godolphin appears to have been on friendly relations with the princess. When the disputes took place between Anne and the king in regard to her settlement, he espoused her cause, and his position at the Treasury was held by the Duchess of Marlborough to be a guarantee that her interests would not be neglected. In or out of office he carried on with her an intimate correspondence, while she, on her side, wrote to him in the most unreserved manner, and in such terms as to render it clear that whatever Godolphin might be to the king she regarded him in the first place as her own friend ; he had arranged her debts and had earned her deepest gratitude ; he was also on personal terms of friendship with her exiled family, and this alone in 1701 was a powerful recommendation to her favour. Private resentment against William had stirred in her bosom sentiments of affection and

pity for her relatives which natural duty had failed to inspire. In her irritation against William, or in the expression of her new-born love for her parents, she turned to Godolphin. Godolphin must have found her confidences embarrassing. He was a minister of the Crown; he was the servant of a master whose reputation he was bound to shield from every injurious breath; it was impossible for him, with due regard to his honour, to listen to conversations full of reproaches against the monster William, and to receive letters loaded with revilings against Caliban.[1] Such was, however, the painful position in which he was placed while he remained in office. Godolphin's connection with the Princess Anne is almost sufficient, without any expectation of future favours, to account for his disinclination to enter William's service, and for his desire to abandon it.

Political reasons, probably, as well as personal ones prompted Godolphin to resign office in 1701. The general election of 1700 had, it is true, filled the House of Commons with Tories, but, in the first place, their power was shortlived, a circumstance which a discerning statesman like Godolphin might have foreseen would be the case; and in the second place, the Tory party was extremely violent, which Godolphin was not. Godolphin was moderate from natural

[1] British Museum Additional MSS. 28070, f. 2. In a letter from Queen Anne to Godolphin of 1701, she says: 'It is a very great satisfaction to me to find that you agree with Mrs. Morley concerning the ill-natured, cruel proceedings of Mr. Caliban.'

disposition, but the time was now approaching when he began to gravitate towards the Whigs on the most important issue which for a whole reign was to separate Whig from Tory, the question of foreign policy, and at such a moment it is probable that a moderate man would be more moderate still ; on the whole, the explanation that he retired from office because of his relations with the Princess Anne, and because his views of public policy differed from those of the Tory party, seems simplest and most natural.

When he retired from the Government, his services to William were at an end. On March 8, 1702, the king died ; and a new reign commenced in which Godolphin was destined to run a great and glorious career.

## CHAPTER V.

### LORD HIGH TREASURER.

There is no better method of appraising a man's material prosperity than by observing the house in which he lives. A rich man may have holes in the elbows of his coat when he might be clothed in purple and fine linen, or a millionaire may prefer a plain mutton chop and a glass of water for his dinner when he might, if it so pleased him, indulge himself with the *chefs-d'œuvre* of French cookery and a bottle of the best Leoville ; but however simple or even penurious a rich man's style and manner of living may be, he is quite certain to dwell in a house which in situation and size is consistent with his fortune.[1] Very rich men often live in large houses in a very poor way, but it is rare to see a poor house inhabited by a rich man.

[1] This is an assertion which I have lately seen doubted in the examination of a witness before a select committee in the House of Commons.

*Question.* The rent that a man pays, the style of a house that he occupies is, is it not, the best of all indexes to his income?—*Answer.* Yes, if you have got the house properly rated.

*Question.* Does not the house that a man occupies form a test of his income?—*Answer.* It does in the middle and lower classes, but not in the upper classes. Rating and Valuation (Scotland) Committee, 4612, 4616.

Tried by this almost unfailing standard, Godolphin's fortunes had unceasingly been on the rise. His early life, or at all events a portion of it, had been apparently spent in chambers in the Temple, his married life in apartments in the fashionable neighbourhood of Whitehall, his middle age in the dignified but active seclusion of Cranbourn. In the beginning of the eighteenth century a further change indicated his advancing prosperity. Towards the end of William's reign he sold Cranbourn to the Princess Anne, and established himself in St. James's Park. Godolphin House,[1] as his residence in London was named, was situated on the present site of Stafford House, and was designed in the severest Jacobean style. Built entirely of red brick, it was so constructed that each wing of its southern face formed a slight bow. In the centre of the house and between the bows was a garden door, while the garden itself divided the house from the Park. The house was undoubtedly ugly, but its position was excellent. Almost in the country, but yet for a man

[1] A sketch of Godolphin House is preserved in the British Museum, and a plan of it is still to be found at the Office of Woods and Forests. The original house seems to have been built by Lady Oglethorpe, who held by lease from the Crown, about 1685. A new lease was granted by the Crown to Lord Lexington in 1691. This lease must have been acquired by Lord Godolphin previous to the year 1701. Godolphin House remained in the Godolphin family until the death of Lady Godolphin, the widow of the last Lord Godolphin, in 1803. The pictures and other effects were shortly afterwards sold by Messrs. Christie and Manson, who still possess catalogues of the sale. The house seems to have been pulled down and rebuilt by the Duke of York about 1825. For the greater part of this information I have to thank Mr. Helland, of the Office of Woods and Forests.

whose vocation was politics sufficiently in the town, close to St. James's Palace, Whitehall, and the Houses of Parliament, yet remote from the crowded slums which render life in a great city obnoxious, it would have been impossible to name a locality in London more suited to the requirements of the future Lord Treasurer. Strolling in his garden, and within the very confines of the metropolis, Godolphin may indeed have fancied that he again wandered in the shady groves which surrounded his beautiful Cranbourn. No town west of St. James's had then risen to disturb the repose of the thrushes and nightingales; Knightsbridge and Kensington were picturesque villages; the suburban villa of a great peer stood on the site which is now occupied by Buckingham Palace; one undulating plain of hill and dale, one gay carpet of sober field and verdant pasture, swept from the palace of St. James's in Westminster to the country solitudes of Windsor.

But St. James's Park in the beginning of the eighteenth century was no longer what it had been in the past after its lake had been planned and its avenues planted by Charles II., or what it was to become in the future under the tasteful care of Brown, the great landscape gardener of last century. In 1702 it had fallen into unsightly decay. Godolphin must have found it difficult as he passed through his garden door and strolled towards the Park to reconcile what he saw with what he remembered. To Godolphin the days of Charles II. were

but as yesterday. The pleasure-worn voluptuary, with his reckless friends and worthless mistresses, his spaniels and his ducks, was still a striking figure in the landscape of memory. Nor could the Park itself, as it was in his youth, have faded from his recollection. There he used to see herds of deer browsing in picturesque confusion, or animated groups of people whose faces were almost as familiar to him as his own, and whose characters are familiar to those of us, even now, who have lingered in the historical picture galleries with which the great masters Evelyn and Pepys have enriched the nation. But there had been vast changes since those days. The persons who had rendered the Park famous had disappeared, and its charms had withered with them ; Charles and the Stewarts had gone, and with them beauty and pleasure. A Dutch successor had for many years occupied the English throne. London had given place to Hampton Court, the artistically arranged park of St. James's to the frigid gardens of Kensington. A dozen years of neglect had transformed the splendid pleasure-ground into a suburban meadow ; private encroachments threatened its boundaries on every side ; great flights of stone steps protruded from the neighbouring houses upon the sacred precincts ; huge walls surmounted with palisades obstructed the view ; private doors permitted ingress and egress without any proper supervision. The privileges of the royal domain had not only been violated, but its very face was deformed ; the

water of the artificial lake was sometimes so high as to flood its banks, and sometimes so low as to stagnate in pools ; the trees along its margin were dying or dead, large ant-hills disfigured the turf ; vehicles of every description jostled each other on the roads ; roughs loafed along the footpaths ; dogs fought upon the grass plots ; a disorderly public-house stood at the decoy, and bade defiance to the authorities ; women in masks, and half-drunken bullies rendered the Mall not only disreputable but insecure. The Park, once the most favoured in London, the resort of all who were polished and noble, had become scarcely better than a bear-garden.

The earliest documents found in the public archives after Godolphin became Lord Treasurer relate to the improvement of St. James's Park. Whether the meditated improvements originated with Godolphin or were only suggestions for his consideration there is no means of knowing. It is, however, safe to conjecture that they were drawn up by his directions, for when a powerful minister suffers from a public nuisance it is reasonable to suppose that the nuisance will soon be considered too great for the public to bear. It is, however, by no means unlikely that the scheme for improving St. James's Park actually emanated from Godolphin himself. Such a labour would have been to him one of love as much as of duty. The friend of Evelyn, the companion of one whose taste in landscape gardening was considered a marvel of the age, and

who was the designer of half the fashionable gardens about London, was not likely to regard the ruin of St. James's Park with composure. To Godolphin, therefore, the task of its embellishment may have presented itself as a pleasure ; and indeed his somewhat methodical mind, as well as his recognised tastes, lead us to the conclusion that the proposed improvements were actually his own. His code of regulations was vigorous and efficacious ; paths were to be cut out, dead trees removed, live ones planted ; roughs were to be expelled, dogs banished to a more appropriate playground ; carriages were to be licensed ; a new force for public superintendence to be raised. It had been found that no reliance could be placed upon the sentries, who, after being posted, soon left their duty ; it was now proposed to keep a servant with the queen's badge who should look after the sentries as well as the people.[1]

But the Park was not more changed than was the position in life of the man who looked upon it. In the early period of the reign of Charles II. Godolphin was a very young politician, indeed he was scarcely more than a boy, while now he was about to assume the most important functions which can fall to the lot of an English citizen, for on May 6, 1702, Queen Anne appointed him Lord Treasurer.

The Lord Treasurership was almost the highest office which it was in the power of the Crown to

[1] *Calendar of State Papers*, November 21, 1702, and October 14, 1700.

bestow. From the time of the Earl of Kent in the reign of William the Conqueror to the time of Rochester, only a few years before, it had been filled by a long succession of distinguished men. Occupied for two centuries almost exclusively by Churchmen, whose liberal education pre-eminently fitted them for the discharge of duties requiring considerable cultivation of mind, the office had, as time passed on and knowledge became diffused, been supplied from the laity as well as from the clergy. Since the reign of Elizabeth, the two Cecils, Burleigh and Salisbury, Dorset and Southampton had all been Lord Treasurers, and had not only derived reputation from their office, but had shed lustre on it. The Lord Treasurer took precedence of all other officers of state. His person was in some degree endowed with the royal sanctity, as to kill him in discharge of his duty was to perpetrate the crime of high treason. His patronage was enormous; the popular respect paid to him boundless; no office so singularly combined honour, power, and the means of amassing wealth. A post at once more lucrative or more honourable could not have been offered to Godolphin; he might well have accepted it with sentiments of honest pride. He was, so to speak, a self-made man; he was not, like Rochester, the son of a Lord Chancellor, or like Shrewsbury, the inheritor of a great name; he inherited nothing but the abilities of his father and grandfather and a family reputation for suffering loyalty which the Stewarts were as apt to

ignore as to requite. With much that was against him he had outstripped in the race of life those who seemed to have everything in their favour. The crown of victory was most fairly earned; the prize struggled for by so many, won by so few, lay at his feet. Incredible as it may seem, he refused, when it was first offered, to stretch forth his hand and pick it up. For long he persisted in declining one of the highest posts which a sovereign of England could offer to a subject. His modesty provoked a smile of incredulity among his self-seeking contemporaries. We think that his reluctance was probably sincere, and not altogether unnatural; of its existence, real or assumed, there is no doubt at all. Burnet, who had every means of knowing, and who had no motive for exhibiting Godolphin's character in a favourable light, is an unimpeachable witness. That Dartmouth and men like Dartmouth should have discredited a sentiment which they could not understand and which does not find common expression in human nature, is not remarkable; for few men, even the most unambitious and idle, after a life of toil will put aside the golden crown for which they would gladly not have competed, but which having won they are willing enough to wear.

It is not, however, difficult to offer at all events a plausible explanation of the inconsistency which induced Godolphin first to refuse the post of Lord Treasurer and then to accept it. He may have seriously desired to occupy no high office, and yet

have found himself compelled by the inexorable force of circumstances to do so. Great political leaders are not free to follow their own inclinations. To refuse or to retire from office is not always in their power. They are the slaves of circumstances. Those who follow them and hope to rise by them, or, as in the case of Marlborough and Godolphin, desire their co-operation, will not suffer them to be indolent. They reign supreme, but their sovereignty, if a splendid, is also a compulsory one. Few party leaders have ever succeeded in abdicating till they have ceased to be serviceable. Lord Chatham in vain sought sanctuary at Hayes from the persecutions of his partisans, and attempted in its seclusion to shroud his infirmities from the notice of mankind. Messages, deputations, appeals, memorials, pursued him into the very abode of sickness. So impossible is it for the ordinary mind to conceive a voluntary surrender of power, that there were those who believed that Chatham actually withdrew from public life for the purpose of surrounding himself with a mysterious interest. But what matter is it for surprise that men who like Godolphin have led a life of toil, or who like Chatham are bowed down with illness, should sigh for a moment's repose, and become conscious of the weight rather than of the honour of their burthen? The dream of an easy life is ever before the eyes of men who are destined to live a hard one. The peace, the verdure, the freshness of the country are always most desirable to those to whom they are denied. No

grass is so rich or green, no flowers so sweet, no rivers so sparkling, no summer breezes so cool, no woods so fragrant or inviting, as those which fill the visionary landscape of the overwrought citizen. It is a dream, and perhaps all the more cherished because the dreamer is conscious that his dream will never be realised. Such dreams Godolphin undoubtedly had. The wish to retreat from public life was constantly in his mind. Through the whole of his career he never accepted office with half the alacrity with which he laid it down. Dartmouth sneeringly observes that Godolphin often refused what he ultimately intended to take. It may be retorted that he was often ultimately obliged to take what he would have only been too glad to refuse. And so it was in 1702. It was not only necessary that Godolphin should join the ministry; it was absolutely essential that he should be at the head of it. The queen pressed him; Marlborough declined to take command of the army unless the revenue was under his control. Godolphin yielded. He probably saw from the first that he should have to yield, and perhaps this very knowledge made him cling more tenaciously to the hopes of a life which to the busy statesman was to remain for ever an ideal. Poet as some say that he was, there was a strain of poetic sentiment and romance in Godolphin's mind. The time had been, years ago, when he would have fled with Margaret Blague to some rustic cottage. Visions of rustic cottages and country pursuits were

always floating before his eyes, and luring him away from the rough stony road of his career. It was fortunate for him that the path of his duty was adorned with such pictures, dreams of delight to himself, subjects of ridicule to the satirist who turned into mockery a sentiment which was too simple and natural for him to understand—

> Granville shall seize the long expected chair,
> Godolphin to some country seat repair,
> Pembroke from all employments be debarred,
> And Marlborough for ancient crimes receive his just reward.[1]

Thus in 1702 Godolphin became Lord High Treasurer and Chief Minister in Queen Anne's first Government. His colleagues were for the most part men whose political reputations were already made. Rochester, who had been Lord Treasurer under James II., became Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland; Marlborough became General of the English forces at home and abroad; Normanby, perhaps better known as Lord Mulgrave, and who was afterwards created Duke of Buckingham, became Privy Seal; Nottingham and Hedges became Secretaries of State; they were all Tories, and selected for office by the queen because they were Tories. The influences which acted upon the new administration, and which rapidly tended almost entirely to revolutionise its material and principles, deserve some attention from those who desire to understand Godolphin's future conduct, and

[1] Walsh's *Poems*: 'Golden Ages Restored.'

we propose to consider them slightly here before proceeding further with the narrative of his life.

Few Governments have ever undergone so complete a transformation as that over which Godolphin in 1702 consented to preside. It began by being Tory, it ended by being Whig; it was selected by the queen especially for its partiality to the Church, yet it engaged in one of the most serious conflicts which has ever occurred between the English Church and an English Government. Events so important and unexpected could hardly take place without the most violent internal convulsions; nor were they destined to do so now. The Government through the whole course of its existence was torn with discord; it was hardly established before there were disputes at the council table, followed by the resignation of one of the highest officers of State; it had hardly endured three years before the great process of mutation from Tory to Whig had begun.

The disintegration of Godolphin's Government was hastened by the manner in which its members had been chosen by the queen. The ministers differed profoundly on matters of the commonest policy, and were alike only in so far as they divided the favour of the sovereign. Thus Godolphin and Rochester were colleagues, but the connection between the statesmen was in name alone; in reality they were relentless opponents and inveterate rivals. So well were their differences understood that the Whigs rejoiced in the appointment of Godolphin to office

as an excellent means of counteracting the violence of the obnoxious Rochester;[1] they discovered the poison and the antidote in the same Government. It is clear that the members of such a Government were certain soon to come into collision, and that some would fall in the strife.

Nor could any Government endure long in the same shape under the system of ministerial selection which prevailed when Queen Anne came to the throne. The choice of ministers was made without any view of constructing what we should term in these days a solid and harmonious Government. It was a system which had worked well in bygone days, when the Crown was strong, when Parliament was weak, and when the power of party was non-existent; but it was becoming ill adapted to the requirements of modern times. An administration formed by the Stewarts had depended almost entirely upon the caprice of the sovereign. No sanction of public opinion had been required as a qualification for its creation. Since the Revolution, indeed, the wishes of the people had made themselves more felt than they had been before, and the Crown had found increasing difficulty in maintaining ministers who had not the support of Parliament. But still, though the support of a parliamentary majority had become a desirable, it was not as yet an essential consideration in the manufacture of a ministry. Both the theory and the

[1] Maynwaring in a letter to Duchess of Marlborough, September or October, 1710. *Duchess of Marlborough's Correspondence*, vol. ii. p. 408.

practice of the constitution permitted the sovereign to choose what minister he liked to take part in the government, without any regard to the favour of Parliament or the confidence of the country. The power of William was, however, to a certain extent more limited in this respect than that of his predecessors. He was a parliamentary king, with a parliamentary title to the throne, and as he owed his existence as sovereign to Parliament he was also compelled to yield it some submission. Nor were the people themselves inclined to be more compliant to the wishes of the king than their representatives. The English people always regarded William with suspicion. He was a foreigner, a Dutchman, a great European statesman, they thought, to whom the interests of England were about on a level with the interests of Austria, and far beneath those of Holland; he was no true-born Englishman—nor could all Defoe's power of satire induce them to believe that he possessed the sentiments of one. The people watched him with jealousy, scanned his ministerial appointments with vigilance, and imposed restraints upon him such as never, except in periods of agitation, had been placed upon an English monarch.

The position of Anne was very different to that of William. She was heir to the Crown not only by law, but by descent, and she was well aware of the importance which her subjects attached to the circumstance. Her first words almost on her accession were an assurance to her Parliament that her heart

was entirely English. There were persons who considered that this expression was merely an ill-natured allusion to the foreign origin and policy of the late king ; but, whether this was so or not, she was in fact only stating a distinction which many people considered to exist between herself and King William, and which explains how it was that she came to possess a power over her subjects and countrymen which William with all his talents was never able to win. The people never for a moment suspected that she would sacrifice the interests of England for the conjectural interests of continental nations. Nor did continental nations expect to find the same friend in Anne that they had found in William. Her accession to the throne was the cause of panic to half the Powers of Europe, and the acuteness of this panic is some measure of the confidence with which she inspired her people. Foreigners as well as Englishmen believed that henceforth if England were to engage in war it must be because English policy demanded it, and not for some large-minded scheme for the general welfare ; and the more her people trusted her and believed in her, the less were they inclined to interpose in her government or to interfere in the choice of her servants.

There was thus on the accession of Anne an inclination to revert to the practice of older times in reference to the selection of ministers, which politicians failed to perceive was rendered unworkable by a great, though unrecognised, development of popular and parliamentary power. The people were getting

more powerful, the Crown less powerful. The certain result of a lapse to the old order of things was the creation of a condition of ministerial instability and disturbance ; the ministers had got their patent, so to speak, from the wrong master, and two opposing powers were immediately brought into conflict, a power which pleaded prescription against a power which pleaded strength. Nothing but confusion could ensue till these rival claims were adjusted. During Godolphin's administration, and while they were in process of adjustment, the Government was naturally subject to the most violent convulsions.

An administration formed in the manner and under the circumstances which we have described may, perhaps, nominally exist for a long time ; but from the nature of its construction the elements must be fleeting, and thus it was with Godolphin's Government. It possessed no ministerial solidarity, and no inter-ministerial responsibility. The conditions which a minister now makes on entering office, that he shall have such another for his colleague, were then unknown, or known only as a degrading stipulation to impose upon the Crown. There was an odour of Pym and of Hampden in such bargains which stank in the nostrils of the sober-headed politicians of the reign of Queen Anne. Godolphin, indeed, impelled, as time went on, by inexorable circumstances, attempted to select the ministers who were to serve under him ; but his conduct was made a matter of severe censure. He was accused of in-

troducing a new phraseology into the court style. 'Madam, I cannot serve you while such a one is in employment.' 'I desire humbly to resign my commission if W—— continues Secretary of State.'[1] In 1702, it was no part of the duty of a minister to make conditions with the queen; the construction of a ministry was not a ministerial, but in fact, as well as in name, a royal function. Thus Godolphin's Government was in a sense doubly weak; for it was efficiently protected neither by the Crown nor by party connection. It became the shuttlecock of opposing forces; while it adhered to the Crown it was in daily peril of destruction by the Whigs, when it attached itself to the Whigs it was very soon destroyed by the intrigues of the Crown. Exposure to political storms sapped, altered, and finally undermined it. To most people it will occur that no administration ever, before dissolution, underwent such vital changes, or had so many premonitory warnings of its coming end. During the eight years of its existence it had almost entirely changed its membership, it had largely shed its principles, and its chiefs had for many months been standing on the brink of the precipice of royal displeasure. Yet when the end came Burnet declared that 'so sudden and so entire a change of the ministry is scarce to be found in our history.'

The differences of object and policy which naturally existed in such a Government were further accen-

[1] *The Examiner*, December 7–14, 1710.

tuated by personal animosities. Rochester had been appointed by Queen Anne Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. He was one of Godolphin's earliest friends and oldest colleagues. The careers of the two ministers had been remarkably similar. Courtiers, plenipotentiaries, members of Parliament together, they had gradually drifted from terms of easy friendship to those of friendly rivalry, and from friendly rivalry to a condition of complete and permanent estrangement. Rochester's credit had not kept pace with his success. As he rose in life, he lost in character. When he was First Commissioner of the Treasury, he was accused of fraudulently farming the revenue; when he was Lord Treasurer of England he was a member of that Court of High Commission of which the law of England knew nothing; when he was Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland in the late reign, his violent temper had led him to address the king in a manner which few kings would tolerate, and which none was less likely to forgive than William. Illustrious as Rochester was, he had missed his mark, and probably nobody was more painfully aware of the fact than he was himself. But the sting of failure lay in the sense that his reverses had opened to Godolphin the road to fortune. Where Rochester failed Godolphin invariably profited. When Rochester had, according to Halifax, been kicked upstairs, and been made to accept the post of President of the Council, it was Godolphin who was appointed to fill the vacant post at the Treasury.

When, in the reign of James, Rochester had floundered hopelessly in the political quicksands, Godolphin had trodden them in comparative safety. In the reign of William and Mary, Rochester, indeed, owed a brief gleam of fortune to Godolphin ; but he owed it to his enmity, not to his friendship. Godolphin had inflamed the Princess Anne against him, and the dislike of one sister was sufficient to induce the other to take him into favour ; and now, as a crowning offence, Anne appointed Godolphin to Rochester's old post of Lord Treasurer. Rochester and Godolphin were hardly colleagues before they came into collision. Godolphin was a moderate man, and he counselled moderate measures. Rochester, with his usual intemperance and impetuosity, strenuously urged a step which would have rendered his own name and that of the Government justly odious ; he proposed to make a sweeping change in every office, however subordinate, where the appointment had been made in the previous reign, and over which the Government had control. Godolphin firmly and successfully refused to sanction such a cruel and imprudent proceeding. The incident, though of not much importance, is sufficient to testify to the differences which, even at this early period, displayed themselves between the two most prominent members of the Government. A few months later Rochester was compelled to leave the administration.

Nor were other leading members of the Government on better terms with Godolphin than Ro-

chester. Normanby was Lord Privy Seal. He was more brilliant than Rochester, less esteemed than Nottingham, less absolutely pledged to party than either. He had truckled to the priests when James was king, and, like so many others, implored that he might be instructed as to his faith; but under William he had acted with the Whig Shrewsbury, though probably with widely different ends to those of his colleague. Normanby was hardly in office before he, too, was in opposition to Godolphin. He had already opposed the declaration in favour of a Protestant successor; he now protested against the order that the Princess Sophia should be prayed for in church. He in vain appealed to the Council against it; the Council, acting on the advice of Godolphin, rejected the appeal and confirmed the order.

The differences between ministers were unhappily not even concealed in the privacy of the council-chamber, but were soon to be manifested conspicuously before Parliament. The Whigs had been charged with intending, on William's death, to acknowledge a Hanoverian prince, to the exclusion of Anne. The accusation was a complete fabrication, as was proved by the most careful investigation into the late king's papers. In the House of Lords it was proposed to pass a severe censure upon the shameless pamphleteers who had ventured to publish these scandalous libels. Though chief of a Tory Government, Godolphin felt that such reparation was due to his political opponents, and that it was not only unjust but unwise

to pass over without reproof an aspersion which could have no other effect than to rouse the resentment of a high-spirited and powerful party. But in this wise and conciliatory policy his Tory colleagues were unable to agree with him, and while the resolutions condemning these malicious prints were under debate Nottingham was doing all he could to minimise the guilt and responsibility of the writers.

There was still one other circumstance besides those that we have described which tended to accelerate changes in the policy as well as in the material of the administration, and this was the method of government which Godolphin and Marlborough attempted to adopt. They were determined, if they could help it, to lean neither upon Whig nor Tory. They desired to construct in the House of Commons a party of their own—a party which was, indeed, to pay a nominal allegiance to the queen, but which in fact they intended to lead and direct themselves.[1] The experiment of governing without party, or, to put it more accurately, the attempt to dominate the two existing parties by the formation of a third, has, we think, hardly been sufficiently noticed by the

[1] It may be proper to remind the reader that in the reign of Queen Anne the power of party was very imperfectly understood. It is, however, a great mistake to suppose, as some do, that party power was not then a great and recognised engine in politics. As early as 1693, Sunderland explained to William III. that the policy of balancing one party against the other was impracticable, and that his Majesty must make up his mind to give a marked preference to the Whigs or the Tories. Sunderland's advice on this occasion proves that his conception of the value of political forces was more accurate than that of Godolphin or Marlborough.

historians of Queen Anne's reign. The matter is, however, very noteworthy for two reasons. First, on account of the absolute failure of the plan, and of the evidence which is consequently supplied of the great progress of party power in the beginning of the eighteenth century; and secondly, because the circumstance explains naturally and satisfactorily changes in Godolphin's political conduct which have often, for want of a better reason, been ascribed to weakness of character.

The scheme of a third party in the reign of Queen Anne had in it much which was at first sight plausible. The Crown, as has just been said, was still a power in the State—a waning power, it is true, but still a power which, in the skilful hands of an adroit statesman, might be used with great effect in the work of government. It had places and pensions at its command, it had honours and wealth to bestow. There seemed to be no insuperable difficulty in the way of collecting a parliamentary party of time-serving politicians who would be prepared at any moment to execute the orders of their leaders. To the sovereign, perhaps, no scheme of government could well be more alluring. It promised, were it successful, to render Anne almost as absolute as her neighbour Lewis XIV., and she clung to it long after it had been abandoned by its authors. To Godolphin and Marlborough it was scarcely less attractive, for while the queen was flattered with the notion that she would govern the

country, they flattered themselves that they would govern the queen.

Two conditions were, however, in so far as Godolphin and Marlborough were concerned, absolutely essential to the success of the scheme, and, as it proved, both conditions were wanting. The first was the certainty of the continuance of the queen's favour, and the second the possibility of a third party at all in a country where from the nature of the case two parties were always bound to exist. In regard to the first, it certainly seems to us strange that Godolphin and Marlborough should have been so convinced of the permanence of the queen's partiality for themselves that they were prepared to build upon it and upon nothing else—in spite of the almost proverbial instability of royal favour. It is probable that the presence of immediate dangers diminished the apparent magnitude of remote ones. It is certain, at all events, that they overrated their own influence, and, in spite of their long intimacy with her, misunderstood the character of the queen.

But Godolphin and Marlborough had in the prosecution of their design to contend with a difficulty, greater even than that of a rupture with the queen, which might after all be temporary and susceptible of arrangement. The establishment for any length of time of a third party in practical politics is absolutely opposed to the genius of the English people. That Godolphin and Marlborough were ignorant of a fact which must be patent to the most casual reader of

English history is not surprising. They lived in days when party government was at its very inception. Neither they nor any of their contemporaries could frame more than a guess as to the ultimate shape into which it might resolve itself. It had no history, no past, and no analysis of it was possible. There was nothing in the reign of Queen Anne to show that an intermediate party might not exist in English politics, as well as two parties representing the poles of political thought; but we believe that there is scarcely an educated man of the present generation who will not pronounce without hesitation that the dream of a middle party is Utopian, that between the two great conflicting parties of the State a third party must be rubbed out as between the upper and the nether millstone, and that the question is only one of time and opportunity as towards which of the two sides its members shall gravitate.

Thus the scheme of an independent party was doubly doomed to failure, and the failure was absolute, though the conditions for the experiment were highly favourable, more favourable almost than they had ever been before, more favourable certainly than they are ever likely to be again. History is too apt to pass over failures and direct its exclusive notice to accomplished facts, and for this reason, perhaps, the effort of Marlborough and Godolphin to break away from party in the reign of Queen Anne, or we should perhaps say their determination to ignore its power, has hardly received the attention it

deserved. But though the failure of the scheme was complete, the attempt to establish it continued for some years to introduce a disturbing element into English politics, more, perhaps, in regard to the conduct of statesmen than to the course of events. Till statesmen of Queen Anne's reign acquiesced in the immutable law of English politics which obliges the politician to espouse one side or the other, their position was an unsettled and a sliding one. In the pursuit of their ends they were compelled to traffick and to compromise with both parties, and they were, therefore, accused of weakness and vacillation by both parties. This, we think, is the true explanation of much which is otherwise very inexplicable in Godolphin's career. He has been reproached with disloyalty to the queen and to the Tory party, with timidity and with fickleness. He was, in fact, engaged in the futile attempt of balancing himself where all equilibrium was impossible. When he proposed to govern England without reference to Whig or Tory, he undertook a task which was absolutely impracticable. His position was false, and his actions were, therefore, weak and inconsistent. From the moment he came into office precept and practice were in conflict ; he repudiated party, but he drew towards the Whigs ; he flattered the queen with the hope of independence, yet he ruined his favour with her by compelling her to accept the most violent partisans as her ministers. His official life was, in fact, a protest

against his professed principles of government; and thus through the whole of his ministerial career inconsistency dogged the steps of himself and his colleagues.

But in 1702 there was scarcely a shadow of evil to cast a gloom over the dawning prospects of Godolphin's government. He was on the most cordial relations with the queen; the dissensions in the cabinet, if somewhat embarrassing, were by no means alarming; and party hostility had not yet had time to raise its head. In England he was for the present safe. Such perplexities as were likely to beset him threatened him from abroad, and it was towards the continent that Godolphin turned his eyes.

For more than a year Europe had been distracted by the war of the Spanish succession. A combination of circumstances had, during William's lifetime, prevented England from participating in it. The country was anxious for peace, and the opinion was moreover rife that an armed and watchful neutrality on the part of the maritime Powers might paralyse the efforts of France even more than active opposition. But the real reason for England's abstention from war was the existence of a Tory administration. In the House of Commons the Tories were omnipotent, they hated the policy of war, and William, for the time, was in their power. Thus he who had made the limitation of French domination the great object of his life, who had schemed to frustrate the expectations of France by a

partition of the Spanish empire, who, in his anxiety to accomplish this important design, had induced his Lord Chancellor to perpetrate a most unconstitutional action by signing and issuing blank commissions, was compelled to acknowledge the succession of a Bourbon to the throne of Spain without a murmur. Had William lived it would no doubt have fallen to his lot to have prosecuted the war which was so triumphantly waged by his successor. A Tory Government with French proclivities was not under any circumstances likely long to retain the favour of the English people in the beginning of the eighteenth century. Before William's death its fate was already sealed. In September 1701 James II. died, and Lewis, inflated with arrogance, was mad enough to acknowledge the pretended Prince of Wales as King of England. The whole of England was at once in a blaze. In the few remaining months that were left to William, he lived to see the people petition the House of Commons to cease from wrangling and vote supplies, and to frame that grand alliance under which Marlborough was to conquer and before which Lewis was to bend.

But though before the death of William the great decision was taken, and it was ordained that England was to fight, there was much in the prospect to render Godolphin despondent as he looked towards the continent; nor is it possible to say that despondency, or at least mistrust, was unreasonable. England—not indeed alone, but with allies on whom she placed no

implicit confidence, and whom she would have to a great extent to support—was about to engage the combined forces of two of the most powerful military empires of Europe, led by generals who were reputed the first commanders of the age. He did not and could not know that in the ranks of the English there was a leader greater than Vendôme, and a diplomatist who for industry, subtlety, and courage has never at any time been excelled in the history of the world. We who look back upon a course of success so uniform and unchequered as to make success appear almost a matter of course, who have heard so frequently of Blenheim and Ramillies as to lose all sense of the greatness and unexpectedness of these victories, are apt to forget the enormous risk which England had to confront when on May 4, 1702, she declared war against France and Spain.

In 1702 the war could no longer be entered upon as favourably as it might have been in 1701. While England and Holland had remained neutral, Lewis, either by force or by intrigue, had been carrying all before him ; his troops or his emissaries had collected on every frontier, or were dispersed through every capital ; with the exception of the Eastern regions of Europe there was scarcely a continental nation which had not just cause to fear him ; in the New World and in the Old World, on the land and on the ocean, his name was dreaded and his power was growing. It was against this formidable potentate that Godolphin and Marlborough, relying upon a

crumbling union of self-seeking States, had to contend. Already the delay of England and Holland to declare hostilities was injuring the alliance; already, from circumstances or despair, the nations were falling away from it, or afraid of joining it.

No State probably in the coming struggle had so much to lose or so much to fear from French aggression as Portugal. Her crown was claimed by the kings of Spain. Her position laid her peculiarly open to attack. She well knew that the pretensions of Spain were not likely to be less formidable when they were urged by a grandson of Lewis XIV. and supported by the gigantic power of the French monarch. The shadow of approaching dissolution seemed to be already upon her. Already, it was said, the arms of Portugal were quartered with those of the new King of Spain; already a Spanish minister had insultingly styled her sovereign the rebel Duke of Braganza; already Portugal had been bought and sold, and the Spanish Low Countries were the price to be paid for a French army of invasion. Portugal would have resisted France had she dared. She had turned to the Northern Powers, but had found them sunk in what the Tory Government considered a politic neutrality. Submission to what appeared an evitable fate alone remained to her, and she had become the ally of France.

The attitude of Savoy was scarcely more satisfactory than that of Portugal. Victor Amadeus II. was a family connection of Lewis XIV. He himself

had espoused the daughter of the Duke of Orleans; his eldest daughter Mary Adelaide had married the Duke of Burgundy, the eldest son of the Dauphin. His second daughter was wife of Philip of Anjou, who was now to be called Philip of Spain. He was in strict political alliance with France, and the alliance was of that sort which is generally the most binding, since it had been formed after experiencing the risks of war. But the Duke of Savoy could not watch without perturbation the exorbitant increase of French Power. He well knew that there could be but little room for the growth of small States under the shadow of the gigantic empire which Lewis intended to plant. It was in vain for France in her communications with Savoy to appeal to religion, to honour, to alliances, to treaties; they were but as dust in the balance when weighed against the natural instinct of self-defence. Savoy, like Portugal, was ripe for resistance, but like Portugal she was too weak to stand alone. Her Duke intrigued with Eugene, while he fought by the side of Catinat. But without assistance or encouragement it was perfectly clear that he would have soon to permanently throw in his fortunes with France.

In Austria, if anywhere, the most resolute opposition to France might have been expected. For the House of Austria this hazardous and costly war was especially to be fought. All the solid fruits of victory were to be placed as a prize in the hands of an Austrian prince, all its shadowy advantages,

except those which might be incidentally snatched in the general scramble, were to be the portion of the allies. From the first the Austrians evinced a selfishness which continued to characterise their conduct during the whole war, and which at times disgusted Godolphin almost to the point of producing a rupture. William III. had vainly attempted some composition between the contending parties. Whatever may be said of his treaties of partition they were undeniable attempts to avoid by amicable means a most sanguinary conflict. He won for his designs the consent of France, he never for a moment procured for them the approbation of Austria. Had the power of Austria equalled her pretensions, it might be said that her obstinacy, however unpardonable, was at least intelligible; but the rapacity of the Emperor of Germany far outran his discretion. He would not curtail by an acre or a village what he considered the just inheritance of the Archduke Charles. Yet when the final catastrophe came, when the King of Spain died, when his will was publicly read in Spain and its fatal provisions no less publicly accepted in France, when Philip was actually being proclaimed at Madrid, and Lewis was marching his armies towards the Netherlands, the Rhine and Italy, Austria was absolutely unprepared for war. She had neither alliances, men, nor money. Her war administration was hopelessly corrupt, her ministers were under the control of French agents; such soldiers as she could place in the field were starving

for want of the supplies which her shameless rulers were diverting to swell their private wealth. The German empire refused to support her, while some of the petty States which composed it leant to the side of France. They distinguished clearly between a war which was to be fought for the House of Hapsburg and a war which was to be fought for a common object. The most considerable of the principalities of the empire was the first to show signs of desertion. The Elector of Bavaria was Governor of the Netherlands, and an uncle of the young King Philip of Spain. The position of the electorate, situated almost in the heart of Germany, made his adhesion to Austria of the last importance. His assistance should have been bought by the Emperor of Austria at any cost, were the price to be paid for it that which purchased the Elector of Brandenburg, the promise of a crown. But the opportunity was neglected. From the commencement of hostilities the Elector of Bavaria showed only too clearly his predilections for France. He won over to her cause his brother, the Elector of Cologne, he permitted 15,000 French troops to occupy the Netherlands, and he paralysed the spirit of resistance which began to inspire the Dutch. Austria watched these proceedings with an indifference which no fear of impending danger could disturb, and waited with a misplaced and apathetic confidence the assault of the foe whom she had so rashly provoked. Such was the Power which now became England's chief ally. And such was the condition of some of those countries

whose friendship Godolphin and Marlborough first sought to gain, and whom they hoped to galvanise into opposition to France.

Godolphin's first official act of foreign policy was an attempt to sap the French alliances. He began with Bavaria. In spite of the hostile attitude of the elector, Bavaria had up to 1702 remained, in name at all events, neutral. The operations on the Rhine in the preceding year had not been of a character to compel her openly to espouse either one side or the other. There was still time, Godolphin hoped, to detach her from France. He was determined to win Bavaria if he could. He was well aware of the local importance of the electorate to the allies, offering as it did an easy passage into the very vitals of Austria. But though he earnestly desired to secure her co-operation, the concessions which he was prepared to make to her were not without limits. The Elector of Bavaria, who was vain, and ambitious of military glory, insisted as the price of his alliance that his army should never be divided and that no general should command it but himself. But to Godolphin Bavarian interests when separated from the common cause seemed insignificant. In his forecast of events it was Savoy rather than Bavaria which the filled larger space. Savoy, he thought, was where the fate of the war principally hinged ; Prince Eugene, the general who was to bring it to a successful termination. He cared little for Bavaria except in so far as her resources could be turned against the

French, or her neutrality assured to the allies, and he judged, perhaps not unjustly, that any good which might be wrought by the assistance of the Bavarian troops would be more than counterbalanced by the employment of the elector as commander-in-chief. Could he have made an alliance with Bavaria, and have gained the Bavarian army without the elector as general, he would have poured it on the plains of Lombardy and added strength to the feeble but victorious Eugene. But to augment the army of Italy, and at the same time supersede in favour of a dull German prince the gallant general to whose skill and enterprise such success as had been achieved in the war was alone due, was a project which Godolphin was unable to favour, and towards which it is quite certain that the Parliament of England would not have voted a farthing.

Godolphin refused to yield to the monstrous pretensions of the elector, but, unwilling to lose him, he proposed an expedient. During the last campaign the imperial forces on the Rhine had been commanded by the King of the Romans. Before the war broke out no one had been so anxious for hostilities as the King of the Romans. His national antipathies ran high, and at the court of Vienna he had heaped insults and invectives on the head of the French ambassador. But as a general he had failed, and had wasted in pomp and prodigality the resources which should have maintained his army. Godolphin now conceived a plan by which a general who was worse

than useless should be withdrawn, and another, who might be dangerous if neglected, should be employed with such a force and in such a manner as to render him harmless. He proposed that the King of the Romans should in future remain at home, that ten thousand men of the elector's army should be sent into Italy, and that the elector himself should command the remainder of the Bavarian forces on the Upper Rhine. Thus he hoped at once to strengthen Prince Eugene, and to satisfy the military ambition of the elector. It is extremely doubtful whether Godolphin's proposal was ever submitted to the consideration of the elector; for shortly after it was matured the Bavarians threw off further reserve, surprised Ulm, occupied Memmingen, and attempted to open a communication with the French army. The defection was not improbably caused by the procrastination of the imperialists. 'A very hopeful project,' writes Godolphin, 'has miscarried by unaccountable delays.' [1]

Godolphin had failed with Bavaria. He turned to Portugal with better hopes of success. In Portugal, at all events, he possessed an advantage which he lacked in Bavaria; he had as an adviser and agent a man of conspicuous ability, who was also a diplomatist of a very high order of merit.

John Methuen was of Scotch descent, indeed his family had once enjoyed the proud distinction of being

[1] Additional MSS. 29588, f. 155. Godolphin to Nottingham, August 30, 1702.

styled Methuen of that ilk. The branch to which Methuen belonged had, however, in 1702 ceased to reside in Scotland, and for several generations before he was born, its members had been substantial English squires or respected members of Parliament. Like so many famous men of that age, Methuen was a statesman as well as a diplomatist. Sunderland, Rochester, and Godolphin had all commenced their careers as envoys and concluded them at home as politicians. Methuen reversed this order. His mission to Lisbon in 1702 seems to have been his first important diplomatic post,[1] while he had been a member, and a distinguished member, of three of King William's Parliaments. In politics he had at one time attached himself to Sunderland, and besides being a member of the Council of Trade had attained to the high dignity of Lord Chancellor of Ireland. Two of his speeches in Parliament are still extant, the sole record of his political life. They were both delivered during the proceedings in the House of Commons against Fenwick. From its semi-legislative, semi-judicial character the bill attainting Fenwick was well calculated to bring out the personal qualities of those who discussed it, though unfortunately, as so often happens in political strife, judgment was too frequently affected by party influences. Methuen evinced sound sense and discrimination. He proclaimed a general adhesion to the forms of justice, but refused to admit that these forms should be permitted to shelter

[1] He was envoy to Portugal in 1692.

criminals. Methuen was an eminently clear-headed, and moderate, though perhaps over-sanguine man. During the war of the Spanish succession he expressed a belief in the success of the English in Portugal, which the results proved was mistaken. But even here he was scarcely wrong in his conceptions, as success was certainly within the grasp of the allies, and would have been secured had it not been for the extraordinary incapacity of the English general and the miserable jealousies of the Portuguese Court. Throughout Methuen's official life he was on intimate terms with Godolphin, as is amply evinced in his most interesting correspondence with the Lord Treasurer. The style of his letters is simple and lucid, and perfectly free from the reproach of official stiffness. Broken in health and assailed by his enemies in England, Methuen laboured with the greatest pertinacity to infuse sense and courage into a cause which required nothing but sense and courage to render it triumphant. We shall have occasion on a future page again to refer to John Methuen and his no less remarkable son Paul.

Godolphin, with the assistance of Methuen, addressed himself with assiduity and judgment to the task of detaching Portugal from France, and of inducing her to enter into a treaty with England and the allies. He approached the interested and feeble country in a manner well adapted to buy her venal friendship. He assured her of English protection, while he convinced her that England had the means

to grant what she offered. Manifestations of English power were in all quarters made conspicuous and impressive. The Portuguese beheld English energy everywhere vitalise the palsied limbs of the huge alliance. Expeditions harassed the coast of Spain, and threatened the Spanish plantations in the West Indies; an English general was sent to the Rhine; money was forwarded to Savoy; and in regard to their own more immediate interests, it was promised that, if Portugal joined the alliance, English troops should augment her own doubtful levies, that English subsidies should flow into the exchequer of her king, and that commercial advantages should swell the trade of her people; while, if the fair offers of English friendship were declined, it was generally believed that English fleets were instructed to insult her coasts and blockade her harbours.[1] Godolphin watched the development of his schemes with an interest not unmixed with dissatisfaction and anxiety. In negotiating the treaty with Portugal he had to contend with serious difficulties at home; he had to modify a policy, which his sagacity told him would be successful, for the purpose of conciliating the trivial opposition of ignorant and factious men; plans had to be abandoned, opportunities lost; he was obliged to restrain where he wished to encourage, to temporise where he desired to act; he well knew that the treaty was of paramount importance to the grand alliance; but he was equally conscious that it could

[1] Luttrell's *Diary*, April 16, 1702.

not be secured without some sacrifice on the part of England, and that the English Parliament, justly representing the feeling of the constituencies, would be sure to grumble at any new charge which might be laid on the overburthened people. These obstacles he prepared to overcome. He entered minutely into every detail of the treaty. The quota of ships to be supplied, the number of men to be sent, whether these men should be cavalry, infantry, or dragoons, whether subsidies would not be better than men, were all points which he carefully weighed and decided upon.[1] As to the expense which an expedition to Portugal would entail upon the country, that, Godolphin said, might be reduced, if not altogether saved. The war in the West Indies was likely in the year 1702 to cause a severe drain upon the Treasury. He recommended that this charge should not be incurred, and that the money thus economised should be devoted to the maintenance of the Portuguese alliance. The suggestion was not likely to be universally popular. The idea of a war in the West Indies was one which in the judgment of many competent persons should not be abandoned, for it was a common opinion at that time that the Spanish West Indian possessions were the most vulnerable part of the Spanish empire, and that to strip her of these rich islands, and to intercept the wealth which flowed freely from them to Catholic Europe, were the best means of injuring

[1] Additional MSS. 29588, f. 324. Godolphin to Nottingham. British Museum.

the Bourbon cause. It is clear, indeed, that Godolphin to a considerable extent shared this opinion, and his proposal therefore to relinquish the war in the West Indies proves how much importance he attached to the treaty with Portugal. In spite of every obstacle, the treaty was at length concluded. It bears the name of Methuen, but it in fact owed its existence to the determination and energy of Godolphin.

While Godolphin was still negotiating the treaty with Portugal, he was at the same time engaged in planning an expedition against the Spanish possessions in the West Indies. That such an expedition should have been thought of at all is perhaps rather surprising after Godolphin's own proposal to limit the war in that quarter of the world. We should hardly notice the expedition, as nothing came of it, were it not that a circumstance connected with it seems to mark Godolphin's confidence at the outset of his ministerial career in a man whom both he and Marlborough came afterwards to regard as their enemy, and because it illustrates the great difficulties which were thrown in the path of the English Government by the other members of the Grand Alliance. In the summer of 1702, Peterborough was named Governor of Jamaica, and commander-in-chief of an expedition intended to operate in the West Indies.

Peterborough, vain, reckless, and ambitious, who would obey no one, and whose greatest enterprises were achieved with a mere handful of men against overwhelming odds, was the very last person whom

we should have expected a minister like Godolphin to choose for such a position. It is difficult to conjecture how Godolphin was ever induced to sanction Peterborough's command, still more, how he had actually come to confide, as his letters prove was the case, in a person so totally different from himself. There was absolutely nothing in common between the calculating man of the world, noted far and wide for the gravity of his demeanour, and that wild and brilliant being who could one day steal an old woman's canary to present to his mistress, and on another display a heroism unsurpassed in the pages of romance. Nor was Godolphin ignorant of Peterborough's character when he made the appointment. Godolphin had been a Commissioner of the Treasury when Peterborough was at its head, and must have been well acquainted with the impracticable character of his chosen general. In later years, too, Godolphin both disliked and distrusted him. Had Godolphin been as crafty as has been often alleged, the appointment might well be considered an artful attempt to get rid of one whose impetuous character would allow of no repose, and whose unbridled vanity, so susceptible of wounds, might at any moment convert him into a dangerous enemy.

The West India expedition never sailed. The jealousy of the Dutch, coupled with their proverbial procrastination, rendered it abortive. Godolphin had been anxious that the expedition should be purely English; he knew well that were the Dutch

to participate in it, delay would afford the Spaniards ample time to prepare for the attack. But naval and military preparations on so extensive a scale could not be kept secret. Intelligence of the expedition penetrated to Holland; avidity for booty, and a desire, if they could not prevent, at least to share the acquisitions of England, induced the Dutch to announce their intention of sending a contingent. Nor was this all, for they not only decided to send ships to join the expedition, but they claimed at the same time reimbursement from the emperor for the expenses thus rendered necessary. Godolphin was filled with indignation when he heard of the Dutch proposals, and he at once communicated to Nottingham his objections to their plans. The Grand Alliance, he urged, contained an express article declaring that whatever the English and Dutch should acquire in the West Indies should belong to themselves. The Austrians had always insisted that this article should be explained, but the explanation had never been given. One of two inconveniences, wrote Godolphin, will attend the demand which the Dutch make upon the emperor, 'either it will weaken our right stipulated in the article above mentioned, or at least it will occasion the emperor's ministers' revival of their pretension to have that article explained, and it would have been much better had neither of these points at present been stirred.'[1] As usual, when action de-

[1] Additional MSS. 29588, f. 233, British Museum. Godolphin to Nottingham, September 15, 1702.

pended upon the co-operation of the Dutch, nothing was done, or rather everything was done too late. The expedition, which should have been secret, became noised abroad. Success as a combined movement became impossible. Godolphin, with an audacity which he sometimes displayed at critical conjunctures, declared himself of opinion that Peterborough should sail alone, and surprise the French and Spaniards. Had his advice been adopted, success might have crowned it; as it was, the opportunity was lost, and the enterprise was relinquished.

While Godolphin was arranging the expedition to the West Indies, he was watching with eager interest the military and naval proceedings which the Government had undertaken against Cadiz. A powerful squadron, partly English and partly Dutch, bearing an army commanded by the Duke of Ormond had been despatched to attack Cadiz. Among all their Spanish acquisitions the Bourbons had obtained none of greater value than Cadiz. It was the richest town in the richest province of Spain. From the earliest history it had been one of those fortunate spots which seemed by partial Nature to be dedicated to commerce. Centuries might pass, nations might rise and fall, but the wealth of the world, whether wafted by Punic, or Latin, or Spanish sail, still poured into its spacious harbour. In the time of the Phœnicians it had been the mart of English tin. In the time of the Romans it had grown enormously wealthy by monopolising the salt fish trade with

Rome ; and now, in the days of Philip, it was the key to the Mediterranean, and the great port of export and import to and from the West Indies. Cadiz was the glory of Spanish commerce. It was to Spain what Liverpool is to England, Marseilles to France. To Spain its possession was invaluable, its loss would be irretrievable, while the expectation of plundering its rich stores excited the cupidity and inflamed the courage of every soldier who was appointed to attack it. The history of the expedition is well known. The dreaded invasion of Cadiz was converted into a huge act of brigandage worthy of Tripolitan or Algerine pirates rather than of the disciplined valour of English and Dutch soldiers. Instead of attacking Cadiz itself, a miserably conceived attempt was made on the suburb of Port St. Mary. Churches were plundered, religious houses were broken open, nuns were violated, private persons despoiled. Licence reigned supreme, till the dread of a hostile force drove the marauders with precipitation to their ships.[1]

While the fleet was employed before Cadiz, Godolphin observed its proceedings with critical

[1] Public Record Office, State Papers, Domestic. From Edward Harding, merchant, written from Faro, October 20, 1702. In the course of his letter he says : 'Our fleet has left behind such a filthy stench among the Spaniards that a whole age will hardly blot it out.' In April, 1702, similar complaints were made from the district of Bois-le-Duc against the English soldiers, who it was alleged pillaged houses as if they were in an enemy's country. There is nothing extraordinary in these complaints. Many of the soldiers were respited criminals. Great numbers of the petitions in the domestic papers of this period at the Record Office, are petitions from malefactors begging to exchange imprisonment or capital punishment for military service.

attention, and as from time to time news of its inactivity reached England, he betrayed the liveliest sentiments of disgust. He was well aware that, ably handled, the force was amply sufficient to effect the most important results, and he beheld with annoyance and mortification the clumsy and dilatory manœuvres which characterised its actions.

The inactivity of the English fleet led Godolphin to despair of a project which he had almost as much at heart as the capture of Cadiz itself. A large convoy of Spanish galleons, laden with treasure, was expected in the autumn of 1702 to appear off the coast of Spain on their return from America. These galleons the English Government had made every preparation to intercept. It had even hoped to capture them by surprise, as it was still doubtful whether, in those days of slow communication, the news of the war, which had broken out between England and France and Spain in May, had arrived in America before the departure of the Spanish flotilla. The exact position of the ships was unknown; but wherever they were Godolphin was determined to take them. If they were on their voyage to Europe a squadron was appointed to cut them off. If they were anchored, as some supposed, off the inhospitable coast of Newfoundland, he had determined that another British squadron should seek them even in those distant and gloomy regions. Late as was the time of year, badly as were the English ships equipped, unwilling as were the sailors

to run the risks and endure the fatigues of a winter voyage across the Atlantic,[1] he had resolved that the Spanish galleons should become his prey. Such, indeed, had been Godolphin's intentions and his hopes. The conduct of the British fleet off Cadiz induced him sorrowfully to prepare for disappointment. The commanders showed neither vigour nor capacity, the sailors seemed absolutely deficient in zeal. When Godolphin at length received intelligence that the flotilla had escaped the English cruisers and was anchored in Vigo Bay, so slight was his confidence in English seamen that he almost abandoned the expectation of its capture.

Godolphin was, however, destined on this occasion to experience an agreeable surprise. The English fleet, which had almost disgraced itself before Cadiz, attacked the Spanish flotilla in Vigo Bay with a vigour and audacity which was beyond all praise. The Spanish galleons were either sunk or taken, though unfortunately a great part of the treasure was lost. This important action entirely effaced all recollection of the misconduct of the expedition, and on its return to England its chiefs received a vote of thanks from both Houses of Parliament, and their triumphs were the subject of a solemn thanksgiving in St. Paul's Cathedral. The procedure

[1] Complaints from admirals against going to sea in the winter are very common at this time. Rooke apparently objected equally to being at sea in the middle of summer, as there is a letter from him among the State Papers in the Public Record Office, dated July 1702, in which he complains that the heat in the Channel is making his ships unhealthy.

to be followed at the thanksgiving received the most careful consideration of the House of Lords, and even gave Godolphin some little trouble in the Cabinet.[1] Nothing in those days was either too parochial or too universal for the attention of either House of Parliament. The Lords ordered that no Peer should drive to St. Paul's with more than two horses, that between certain hours of the day all traffic should be stopped, and that the Peers themselves should assemble in their own chamber in their robes at eight o'clock in the morning.

It is interesting to observe in Godolphin's correspondence what a very contemptuous opinion he held of the navy. The squadrons engaged before Cadiz and afterwards in the triumphant attack at Vigo were commanded by two most distinguished English admirals. The presence of Shovel and Rooke would, we should have thought, of itself have been sufficient to warrant the assumption that any naval operations would have been executed with zeal and skill. But Godolphin had no faith in sailors, even though these sailors were Shovel and Rooke. On the 18th of September, while the fleet was still before Cadiz, he wrote to Nottingham, 'What I fear most is the great unwillingness of the fleet to expose their ships on any occasion, or for any service whatsoever, the landmen I am confident will do their parts, and I hope the seamen will find less difficulty

[1] Additional MSS. 29588, f. 337, British Museum. Godolphin to Nottingham, November 3.

than they opine in their imaginations.'[1] Again, in October, writing to declare his opinion that an attack should be made on the flotilla in Vigo Bay, he goes on to say 'that by all our accounts from Cadiz and from Mr. Methuen, our fleet seems to me to be so desirous of losing no time in coming home that I am very apprehensive that they won't go out of their way to make any attempt upon that place or any place without express orders for it which if not too late I should wish might be sent to them.'[2]

Nor were Godolphin's fears unreasonable. For years the credit of the British navy had been declining. Since the days of Blake scarcely an admiral of any distinction had appeared, or a deed of any special merit been performed. As in the time of the Protectorate the nation passed through fire, so did the weapons upon which the nation relied for defence. Blake revolutionised the navy, as Cromwell revolutionised the State. 'He despised those rules, which had been long in practice, to keep his ship and men out of danger, which had been held in former times a point of great ability and circumspection, as if the principal art requisite in the captain of a ship had been to be sure to come home safe again.'[3] But the rules and maxims of these men of iron endured scarcely longer than their own lives. Russell was esteemed a good and a brave sailor, yet his

[1] Additional MSS. 29588, f. 242, British Museum. Godolphin to Nottingham, September 1702.

[2] Additional MSS. 29588, f. 324, British Museum. Godolphin to Nottingham, October 1702.

[3] Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*, vol. vi. p. 42.

miserable complaints from Cadiz in 1694 almost make us blush after the lapse of nearly two centuries. Benbow's name will be familiar wherever English history is read; yet Benbow's captains openly deserted him in the middle of an action to the everlasting shame of the navy of that day. Nor, unfortunately, was the accusation against English sailors one of lukewarmness and cowardice alone. The Parliamentary Committee appointed in 1708 to inquire into the conduct and management of the navy very nearly convicted it of piratical practices. Thus if Godolphin spoke of the navy in disparaging terms, he was justified in the evil opinion which he had of it; though to us it must always seem strange that he should have placed more reliance upon an army under an unknown general like Ormond than upon an English fleet under admirals so renowned as Rooke and Shovel. But it should perhaps not be forgotten that Godolphin and Rooke were in 1702 political opponents, and that these were the days when military difficulties were sometimes created to accomplish political ends, and when the military achievements of one party did not by any means give satisfaction to the other. Godolphin knew that Rooke was averse to the enterprise against Cadiz, and that on this occasion at all events he was another instance of a British sailor without zeal, and that no one had so strenuously endeavoured to prevent the expedition from sailing as the man who was appointed to command it.[1]

[1] Burnet says Rooke always violently opposed the expedition.

## CHAPTER VI.

### ADMINISTRATION IN 1703.

GODOLPHIN's name had already been associated with some of the great improvements in and about London. He had been one of the first and largest subscribers to Greenwich Hospital; he had restored, or at all events attempted to restore, St. James's Park. In 1703 we find him entertaining plans for rebuilding Whitehall.

In 1691, Whitehall, with the exception of the banqueting-hall, had been burnt to the ground. Its loss was deplorable, for no palace in England was more beautiful or more popular. It had become, moreover, almost an historical monument, as either before it, or within it, had occurred some of the most interesting events in English history. It had witnessed Charles I. die for opposing the Parliament; Harrison die for opposing the king. Its walls had sheltered the fanatic Cromwell, no less than the fanatic James. Its chapel had echoed to the preaching of the Independent, and resounded with the solemn music of Italian choristers. The very chambers which had afforded quarters to the devout and rigid soldiers of the Covenant had contained occupants of a fairer de-

scription whose presence there was sufficient to make the military moralists turn in their graves. Its historical associations were enhanced by the artistic treasures it contained ; on its walls were hung costly and beautiful masterpieces by Titiens, Holbein, and Raphael, its chimney-pieces were enriched by the incomparable carvings of Gibbons, its library was filled with books, rare indeed rather than useful, but of an inestimable antiquarian value. The destruction of this noble palace was a public disaster. To many it seemed an indication of Divine displeasure ; a sign that God was punishing the transgressions of His people as He had once chastised the sins of the erring children of Israel. He had allowed the light of the Gospel to shine upon the people ; he had conferred the heavenly blessing of the reformed faith upon them, and yet they had strayed after strange gods ; their king had erected the idolatry of the mass, and, to use the cant of the day, their great men and ministers had bowed themselves down in the House of Rimmon. The belief was confirmed when it was discovered that the conflagration had broken out in the rooms of the Duchess of Portsmouth. If the conflagration was due to the anger of heaven, its vengeance, it must be admitted, was complete, for the palace was reduced to ashes. The loss was irreparable ; for that very reason, no doubt, there was a universal disposition to repair it.

In 1703 the Duke of Shrewsbury, partly from disgust with English politics, but mostly on account of his

health, had taken up his residence at Rome. Rome then even more than now was regarded as the seat of the arts, and the spot above all others where those should repair who search for artist's models in statuary, architecture, or painting. Shrewsbury had long been on friendly terms with Godolphin. They had been, as was so frequently the case in those days, colleagues in office and leading members of rival parties; one was a Whig who was destined to become a Tory, the other was a Tory who was destined to become a Whig; but they were both moderate men, and for years their intercourse was friendly and uninterrupted. Godolphin now sought from Shrewsbury some plan framed in Rome and conceived by Italian artists for the restoration of Whitehall. The plan which Shrewsbury submitted to Godolphin is interesting now, chiefly as a memorial of what was intended, and of the sort of edifice which it was proposed to construct. Had the scheme been adopted, the new palace would have comprehended within its walls not only the residence of the king, but the offices of all the great ministers of State, and the official centralisation, which has for many years been the aim of ensuing Governments, would have been achieved.

The plan of the building was curious. The first floor was to be the royal palace, the basement was to be devoted to the offices of the Admiralty, Treasury, Secretary of State, &c. It is very significant of the power of the Crown in the beginning

of the eighteenth century, that it should have been considered an object of importance to bring the residence of the sovereign into close contact with the executive offices of government. It was then as important for these offices to be near the sovereign as it is now that they should be near the House of Commons. The design of rebuilding Whitehall was relinquished. Many palpable blots were visible upon the plans, and Shrewsbury himself was the first to point them out.[1]

While Godolphin was thus, in 1703, planning the reconstruction of Whitehall, he was at the same time deeply engaged in domestic politics. We think that in this year we first trace a distinct inclination in him towards Whig principles, and this upon a question which may be taken as a sure test of party faith in that age ; the question of religious toleration.

In 1702 the Occasional Conformity Bill was introduced into the House of Commons. The House of Commons, which then contained in its ranks at least two Tories for every single Whig, passed it ; but the House of Lords, possessed of more moderate and enlightened views, threw it out. In 1703 and 1704 the bill was revived in the Lower House. The object of the bill was simply, to use the words of Mr. Lecky, to exclude the Dissenters from all Government positions of power, dignity, or profit. The Test Act had succeeded in excluding Roman Catholics

[1] Shrewsbury from Rome, June 16, 1703. Additional MSS. 28056, British Museum.

from corporate and civil offices, but it had placed no disability upon those moderate Dissenters who were prepared to communicate according to the Anglican ritual. The bill attempted to disqualify both Dissenter and Catholic alike. It would be difficult to conceive a measure more directly calculated to display the inner feelings and moral tendencies of statesmen, or more certain to touch the very root of the difference from which the antagonism between Whig and Tory springs.

For years the Dissenters had been subject to the most unjust inequalities of law. The Corporation and Conventicles Acts in particular were a disgrace to the English statute book. Penal laws against the Catholics had their apology. They were levelled against papal supremacy, and against the constant intriguing of a power which was bound by no promise and gave absolution for every crime. They were laws not so much against conscience as against veiled rebellion and ecclesiastical usurpation. But from the Dissenters no such dangers were to be apprehended. The rebellion against Charles I., it is true, was coloured with a religious complexion, but those who led it have never been charged with treason against the liberties of the people. The war was in truth a war for liberty which had been provoked by misgovernment, and was waged for the redress of grievances by the English people, for an English object, and certainly on behalf of no foreign potentate, temporal or ecclesiastical. But not only was no danger to be dreaded

from the Dissenters, they were the very pith and marrow of the nation; their labours had largely increased its wealth; the most opulent merchants in the city, the shrewdest mechanics in the world, men whom Lord Somers[1] styled the very foundations of the dignity of England, were to be found in their ranks. Yet in spite of their great services, the Dissenters were compelled to endure a persecution, which was degrading and offensive to men conscious of their own integrity and merit. They knew that the country had grown fat through their industry, but they were by law denied a place—even an outside place—in the government of the nation which they had enriched. The sense of injustice had however never diminished their patriotism. No temptation could shake their loyalty to the country, and James II. discovered to his cost that they nobly preferred to endure the evils of their lot, rather than accept an Indulgence which they could only enjoy at the expense of public liberty.

William's Toleration Act had done much to render the condition of the Dissenters endurable; the good sense of the country had done even more. When Queen Anne ascended the throne a display of conformity to the English Church was still required by law before a candidate could enter upon a corporate office. The Dissenters regarded the Act as a mere qualification for office, which pledged them to no change of doctrine or faith, and the bulk of their

[1] Cunningham's *History of Great Britain*, vol. i. p. 318.

fellow-countrymen were perfectly willing to accept the construction which they put upon it. The days of intolerance were, indeed, passing away. Penal statutes might remain on the statute book, alarms, for the most part artificial, might be raised that the Church was in danger, but distant as the goal was, obscured as it frequently became by the vapours of bigotry or the dust of political strife, the country was already gradually approaching the great haven of peace, religious equality.

Anne was no sooner on the throne than a serious attempt was made to convert the penal laws against Dissenters into realities; and a measure was proposed which, had it passed, would either have extirpated dissent, or extirpated the Dissenter as a force from the body politic. The Act for suppressing Occasional Conformity was distinctly retrogressive. It was worse than tyranny, for it was a return to tyranny after a partial liberation from it.

It is not our duty here to trace the history of Occasional Conformity, or the despicable attempts made to check it, further than is necessary to explain what part Godolphin took in these proceedings and how far he concurred in opinions which are now universally condemned as narrow, ungenerous, and unstatesmanlike. Suffice it to say that the House of Commons again in 1703 passed the bill for restraining Occasional Conformity by a large majority, and that the House of Lords was again wise enough and strong enough to throw it out. In the following

year, 1704, the bill was once more introduced, and suffered a similar fate. During this period popular opinion was divided, as in such a case it was sure to be; Churchmen were rampant in its favour; women, often, it was alleged, with characters none of the best,[1] were open-mouthed in its support; but the bulk of the people, with the good sense which is inherent in the English, took the rational view. They could see no reason why a Dissenter strict in his attendance at chapel, scrupulous in his dealings with others, and a pattern in private life, should not hold an office with as much advantage to the country as the Tory Sir Edward Seymour, whose public life was disgraced by the acceptance of bribes, whose private life was notoriously dissolute, and who openly avowed that he had neither received the communion nor even heard a sermon in the Church of England for a period of seven years. To the dull and unprejudiced Englishman the balance seemed altogether in favour of the Dissenter.

The conduct of Godolphin in reference to the Occasional Conformity Bill was strangely contradictory. Twice he voted for it; once against it. His position was no doubt an extremely difficult one. He was the servant of a queen whose affection for the Church was little short of bigoted; he was a member of a Government composed of men whose devotion to it was traditional, the colleague of a minister who peculiarly pretended to be its prop and defender; the

[1] Cunningham's *History of Great Britain*, vol. i. p. 318.

very consequence which he himself possessed in the royal councils was due to his reputed attachment to the Church. Had Godolphin refused to vote for the Occasional Conformity Bill when it was first introduced, he would probably have done much to injure himself and very little to injure the bill. The queen would have regarded him as a traitor. He could not have coalesced with the Whigs had he even desired to do so. Neutrality was not in his power. Prince George of Denmark himself could not obtain this indulgence, and exhibited to the world the grotesque spectacle of the Prince Consort openly and avowedly voting against his own conscience on a point of religion. Whether Godolphin approved of the measure or whether he did not, he was at first practically obliged to support it; and it only remains for us to discover whether the support which he gave was voluntary or compulsory.

Every indication leads us to suspect that Godolphin disliked the Occasional Conformity Bill, but was obliged from political pressure to accept it. In fact it is not improbable that the bill was skilfully framed with the view of doing him harm. His old allies the Tories conceived that the attitude which he was assuming towards the Whigs was too friendly. They thought that they would place him in a dilemma, that they would compel him either to favour or oppose the Dissenters, and that he would thus be obliged to offend the queen on the one hand or the Whigs on the other. Their stratagem was precisely the same

as that which a few years later they employed when, hoping to involve Godolphin in a quarrel either with the queen or the Whigs, they introduced a bill inviting the Elector of Hanover to reside in England; and it was attended by precisely the same results. It was a complete failure; Godolphin was not injured; his advance towards the Whigs was not checked; and every right-minded person was disgusted with a policy which was obviously prompted as much by party animosity as by public spirit. We are inclined to think, therefore, that Godolphin's votes on the two first Occasional Conformity Bills cannot be taken as any exact index to his sentiments, or any conclusive proof of his approbation of what the bills contained. The bill of 1703 was apparently brought in without his knowledge or consent, and its announcement in the Gazette was surreptitiously procured by Nottingham.[1] Godolphin did all that he could to impede its progress; he declared the measure unseasonable; he laboured to reconcile the queen with the Whigs,[2] and while he dissuaded her from supporting the bill, his dependents voted against it. In the following year, upon the reintroduction of the bill, Godolphin thought himself strong enough to vote against it himself. The bill was again thrown out, and for several years the passage of this obnoxious measure was delayed. The delay was very largely due to the antagonism of Godolphin. Prince George declared that he and Godolphin could have

[1] Coxe's *Marlborough*, vol. i. p. 144. [2] *Ibid.* pp. 131, 132.

passed the bill had they chosen, but that they did not choose to do so.[1] Whether this is so or not, we date with some degree of confidence Godolphin's first distinct departure from the Tory party from the time of the controversy on these bills.

The discussions on the Occasional Conformity Bills brought Godolphin into contact with a writer of considerable literary eminence, and in a manner which strongly confirms the impression that he disliked the measure.

Charles Davenant had already, in 1703, taken a high place among essayists and pamphleteers. The eldest son of the famous Sir William Davenant, he had been educated at Oxford, and for a short time had a share in the Duke of York's theatre. During the reign of James II. he had been a commissioner of the excise, an office which he lost at the Revolution, and in that of William had represented during two Parliaments the borough of Great Bedwin in Wiltshire, a position in which he failed to distinguish himself. His natural tastes, however, soon led him to turn from the life of a theatrical manager and playright, and even from that of an active politician, to the more congenial avocation of writing essays, or, as he often called them, discourses upon commercial and political topics. He was a man of wide-ranging and philosophical mind, and deeply imbued with the precepts and lessons of Sir William Petty. His writings show that he was an independent and advanced

[1] Coxe's *Marlborough*, vol. i. p. 145.

thinker. Already in 1703 he had composed some treatises of importance. Essays on East India trade, on the public revenues and trade of England, and on the balance of power, had at intervals proceeded from his pen and had excited the attention and applause of the public. He now prepared a new paper for publication. Like many moderate men, both Whig and Tory, he was shocked to observe the factious violence of parties. War was raging on the Continent, England was engaged in a sanguinary struggle with her ancient and hereditary enemy, grown many times more powerful than ever she was before, yet the most violent dissensions split the country from one end to the other. Davenant undertook the creditable but hopeless task of calming the storm of party passion. He wrote an essay entitled 'Peace at Home and War Abroad,' and laid the manuscript of it before Godolphin. The object of the discourse, he says in a letter to the Lord Treasurer, is to recommend moderation. Though he does not pretend to guide ministers, it is proper, he remarks, that they should see the physic which is offered. A large portion of the work is directed against the Occasional Conformity Bill, but this he undertook not to publish without Godolphin's consent.[1]

When 'Peace at Home and War Abroad' appeared before the public, many people attributed a share in its authorship to Godolphin; some of the opinions

[1] Charles Davenant to Godolphin, October 19, 1703. Additional MSS. 28055, f. 13, British Museum.

expressed in it were known, some were suspected, to be those of the Lord Treasurer; but whether this is so or not, the pamphlet to a very large degree determines the private political views which Godolphin then entertained on the great question of Occasional Conformity. Davenant's letter is dated October 19, the second reading of the Occasional Conformity Bill was not introduced into the House of Commons till late in the following November. Davenant must have been well assured of Godolphin's hostility to the bill, before he ventured to submit a manuscript to his judgment, replete with arguments, which in the course of a few weeks the Lord Treasurer might consider it his duty to combat. That Godolphin, therefore, inspired the essay, we think can hardly for a moment be doubted. All the circumstances of the publication warrant the assumption. In the first place there is the general report of Godolphin's connection with it; in the second there is the private letter from the author, deliberately laying the manuscript before him for the purposes of approbation and correction, and it is not likely that any author would submit his work to the judgment of one whose verdict he knew would be unfavourable. Thus 'Peace at Home and War Abroad' affords valuable testimony of Godolphin's private opinions; for in no way could his views be more clearly ascertained than by the study of an essay which, written with a purpose, was really but not ostensibly his own. His public utterances, like the utterances of all public men, were necessarily some-

what adapted to the exigencies of his position, but a pamphlet inspired by him may without doubt be considered as reflecting his thoughts and wishes. The pamphlet is moderate and thoughtful. It defines the various functions of the executive, the ministers, and the legislature; it demonstrates the mischief which may be caused by a confusion of duties, and it warns the Government to take care that furious zeal may commit no outrage, and that superstition may get no entrance.[1]

While in some quarters 'Peace at Home and War Abroad' was accepted as the exposition of the views of Godolphin and Halifax, it was received in others with a storm of derision not altogether undeserved. The public had not forgotten that scarcely two years had elapsed since Davenant had been engaged in libelling the Whigs in a pamphlet styled 'Tom Double returned out of the Country,' or that for writing it he had received the merited censure of the House of Lords. What, it was asked, was to be thought of a

[1] Davenant's *Works*, vol. v. p. 27. This was not the age when moderation was a popular virtue, as is shown by the violent contrasts of servility to the Crown on the one hand, and of party violence on the other. Men of moderation were thus ridiculed in 1705 :—

'For mod'rate statesmen, like camelians, wear
A diff'rent form in every diff'rent air.
They stick at nothing to secure their ends,
Caress their enemies, betray their friends.
Their medley temper, their amphibious mind
Is fraught with principles of every kind'—

and so on.—*Poems on State Affairs*, vol. iv. p. 103. Oldmixon writes of the year 1704, that the words 'union' and 'moderation' had become so odious, that in sermons, especially at Oxford, they were represented as something inimical to the Church.

man who in the course of a few months could thus identify himself with his ancient foes? Davenant had satirised the Whigs under the title of Tom Double; here, it was exclaimed, was the veritable and true Tom Double—a Tory to-day and a Whig to-morrow. In truth, the circumstances of Davenant's conversion are not altogether free from suspicion. It may have been the result of conviction, but it is certain that Godolphin presented the author with a place and a handsome salary.[1]

While Godolphin was perusing Davenant's manuscript, he was engaged in a less agreeable manner with another and a more celebrated author.

Daniel De Foe was always in trouble. Endowed with a facile pen and ready wit, he had not the self-restraint which renders these dangerous gifts harmless. De Foe, no less than Davenant, had been struck by the passions which the debates on Occasional Conformity had excited, but their minds had been impressed by the same circumstances in a very different manner. Davenant sighed over what was serious: De Foe mocked at what was ludicrous. To Davenant the rivalry of parties seemed the beginning of the end. He recollected the saying of Burleigh that England could never be undone but by her Parliament, and in the factions of the time he beheld the ruin of his country. De Foe, on the other hand, watched the controversy excited by the Occasional Conformity Bill with sarcastic humour. He observed with grim

[1] *Memoirs of De Foe*, by Walter Wilson, p. 145.

pleasure solemn writers and learned dignitaries of the Church indulging in language which, stripped of the flowers of rhetoric, inculcated the severest maxims of persecution. Their erring brethren had wandered from the path of light and were wallowing in the miry clay, while these apostles of peace, whose vocation it was to preach good-will among men, loudly proclaimed their transgressions and threatened them with punishment instead of offering them assistance. De Foe held up a mirror to the Church that she might behold her own features distorted by the odious passion of persecution. He never imagined for a moment that this spectacle of horror could be regarded without loathing and disgust. But so it was, and in his 'Shortest Way with the Dissenters' many recognised with approval the work of a zealous and excellent, if perhaps too eager, Churchman. When this admirable composition was discovered to be a satire a change took place in public opinion. There was a great scandal, not so much because of the brutal advice which the pamphlet contained, not so much because the writer had advised that Dissenters should be treated like snakes and toads and reptiles, or plucked out from the true corn as noxious and poisonous weeds, such jargon was common enough at the time and served to add a biblical flavour to the nauseous dose of persecution; the objection to the essay was not because these things had been said, but because they had not been said seriously. The Speaker Harley informed Godol-

phin that the author of this libel must be discovered,[1] and De Foe was apprehended and placed in custody. It is stated that while De Foe was in prison Nottingham attempted to bribe him to disclose the names of those who had employed him to write the pamphlet, so certain at that period did it seem that a political pamphleteer was merely an agent of a minister or a party.[2] De Foe was anxious, if he could, to save himself from the penalty of his indiscretion, and he volunteered a confession. 'My lord,' writes Godolphin to Nottingham, 'after I had the honour to see your lordship yesterday Mr. William Penn came to me to tell me he had acquainted my Lord Privy Seal that De Foe was ready to make oath to your lordship of all which he knew, and to give an account of all his accomplices in whatsoever he had been concerned, for the information of the Queen and the Lords of the Council, provided by so doing he may be excused from the punishment of the pillory, and not produced as evidence against any people whatsoever.'[3] The queen when she had heard the confession considered that it was insufficient,[4] and the sentence on De Foe was executed. Had a full confession been

[1] Godolphin to Nottingham. Additional MSS. 29589, f. 398, British Museum.

[2] Thus we find Harley, August 9, 1702, writing to Godolphin from Brambon observing that it would be a great advantage to have some 'discreet writer' on the Government side.—Additional MSS. 28055, f. 3, British Museum.

[3] Godolphin to Nottingham, Windsor, July 17. Additional MSS. 29589, f. 28, British Museum.

[4] Same to same, July 22. *Ibid.* f. 45.

made it would have been interesting to posterity. Happily, however, for De Foe, his reputation escaped the indelible stain of betraying his friends and bringing them to punishment.

The proceedings on this occasion, unpleasant as they were, did not prevent the future intercourse of Godolphin and De Foe. Godolphin employed De Foe as an agent of the Government during the treaty of Union with Scotland, and De Foe has recorded of Godolphin a sentiment as magnanimous as at that time it was rare. When Harley, his first benefactor, separated from Godolphin, and was compelled to resign office in the Government, De Foe, doubtful of his reception, presented himself before the Lord Treasurer, and expressed his fears that his interest might be diminished by the loss of his patron. 'Not at all, Mr. De Foe,' replied Godolphin, 'I always think a man honest till I find him the contrary.'[1] There is a ring in the answer which reminds us of some of the generous and pithy sayings of William III.

[1] Wilson's *Memoirs of De Foe*, vol. iii. p. 8. A curious letter exists in the Public Record Office, dated Pynes, August 27, 1705, from Hugh Stafford to Secretary Hedges, complaining that De Foe was in the habit of receiving at Weymouth letters of dangerous consequence to the queen and Government. As this letter is in no way connected with Godolphin, I should not have noticed it here, except that one of the charges made against De Foe may prove interesting to politicians of the present day. Stafford accuses De Foe of speaking contemptuously of the younger members of the House of Commons, with the purpose of injuring their reputation with the people; he goes on to say, 'Since writing of this I have a further information from very good hands, that he deals very freely in his common conversation with the young parliament men, in basely reflecting on them lately in my neighbourhood by saying: as for them, they generally lay drinking at some tavern or

While the Lord Treasurer thus struggled with domestic difficulties in the Cabinet, his attention was deeply engaged with the military events passing on the Continent. When Godolphin glanced at the theatre of war, there was not a spot upon which his eye could rest with satisfaction; there was little to encourage the hope of even partial success in the future; there was absolutely nothing to presage that brilliant series of victories which has rendered the recollection of the war of Spanish succession glorious. The campaign of 1702 had in every direction been adverse to the allies; the Imperialists had been beaten by Villars at Friedlingen and by Vendôme in Italy; Tallard had extended his forces along the Rhine and the Moselle, and had taken Treves; the French only waited the advent of spring to put into execution a gigantic design by which they proposed to pour their troops from the defiles of the Black Forest and from the passes of the Italian Alps in direct attack on Vienna itself. To withstand a project so plausible and so threatening the powers of the allies appeared, in 1703, to be utterly inadequate. Marlborough's great reputation as a soldier had yet

other near the House, and leave the concerns of the nation to half a score old stagers to manage, till any business of moment, and then they were sent for, who as soon as they come into the House immediately whisper to one, and so to another, to know how Sir Edward, Sir Humphrey, or Sir John how they voted, and having learnt it without ever learning the merits of the cause, or indeed anything of the matter, immediately cry out they give their vote the same way, let it be right or wrong as long as Sir Edward and they vote so,' &c., &c.—*State Papers: Domestic*, Anne, Bundle 10, p. 21, Public Record Office.

to be made ; the Dutch were cross-grained and ill-advised ; their generals, Opdam and Cohorn, obstinate and wrong-headed. All Marlborough's time and energy were employed in correcting the mistakes which neither advice nor persuasion could prevent his stiff-necked colleagues from making. The English Government, filled with alarm at the state of the war, and desiring to make a diversion, had been deliberating upon a plan for attacking Dieppe, when circumstances occurred which led them to turn their eyes in another direction, and which to a certain extent affected the course of the war.

In 1703 the formidable insurrection of the Camisards broke out in the Cevennes. This mountainous district was the last refuge of religious liberty in France. Here, concealed in caves and sheltered in forests, were to be found those unhappy beings who had perversely clung to the faith of their fathers, and had ventured to brave the terrible and certain punishment which attached in France to Protestant recusancy. Even in these days, when the lapse of time has somewhat chilled our sympathies with the sufferings of former generations of men, we cannot read without horror and disgust the narrative of that military and ecclesiastical tyranny which converted harmless and innocent peasants into vindictive savages burning to avenge their own miseries by inflicting disasters and humiliation on their native land. The petition of these poor people contained nothing to justify the destructive wrath of king or priest. They

desired to worship God in their own fashion uninterfered with themselves, interfering with none. Their claim received a harsh and final answer. They were bidden to attend to the monitions of their priests, or they were threatened with the horrors of a military persecution. Nor had they long to wait for the accomplishment of these menaces. Intolerable oppression was soon adopted to extort from them a miserable and worthless acquiescence in the forms of orthodoxy. Drummers drummed before their windows at night to prevent them from sleeping, they were compelled to turn spits till they were nearly roasted or promised to attend mass, their feet were placed on red-hot iron, their bodies thrust into wells till they were half frozen.[1] The crown of martyrdom might have been theirs had they been possessed of the passive resignation which seems essentially to characterise the Christian martyr ; but with the spirit of men, rather than with the patient meekness of saints, they prepared to defend their lives, to vindicate their liberties, and to avenge on their oppressors the wrongs so ruthlessly inflicted on themselves.

Godolphin at once recognised the importance to England of the Camisard rebellion. He had never favoured the enterprise against Dieppe. In the Cevennes, on the other hand, he perceived that there was much to encourage the hope of a successful in-

[1] Cavalier's *Memoirs*. The Duke of Berwick, in his *Memoirs*, also gives various instances of atrocities practised upon the Camisards, but apparently without any perception of the brutality which he describes.

vasion. Dieppe,[1] he objected to Nottingham, was situated in the very centre of the French forces. There was an army close to it, there were various garrisons in its neighbourhood, the population was thoroughly Catholic, and its capture by the English would inevitably be attended by an immediate counter-attack. In the Cevennes, on the other hand, the case was different. There, he urged, an English force might be temporarily safe; the people were not only in insurrection, but were Protestants, and no French army could disturb an invader when once established, for at least three months. From the moment that the insurrection in the Cevennes broke out Godolphin's heart became, in fact, fixed upon operations in the Mediterranean. The south of France, he thought, was the most vulnerable part of the kingdom. If he had been permitted to follow his own inclinations, he would have sent a fleet into the Mediterranean, swept the Adriatic, and burnt the French magazines at Genoa and Leghorn.[2] From the first he seems to have appreciated to a greater degree than his contemporaries the golden opportunity which the troubles in Provence offered to English military enterprise. Meagre as is Godolphin's correspondence, much concerning his views and his policy as must be left to conjecture, or advanced with hesitation, nothing, we think, is more apparent through

[1] Additional MSS. 29589, f. 55, British Museum. Godolphin to Nottingham, July 23.

[2] A memorandum in Godolphin's handwriting, 1703. Additional MSS. 29589, f. 327, British Museum.

several years of his administration than his desire to harass the French by invasions, and by invasions if possible from the south, and in connection with the Camisard outbreak. That his plans were never effectually put into execution was due partly to the opposition of his colleagues in England, and partly, we must say, to what appears to us to have been a disinclination on the part of Marlborough to promote any campaign but his own. Had France been vigorously attacked from the side of Savoy, and had an energetic attempt been made to supply the Camisards with officers and money, the course of the war might have been shortened. To the great leader of the Camisards on the one hand, and to the generals of Lewis on the other, the apathy of the English was astounding. Cavalier tells us that if the allies in 1703 had only taken advantage of the position of affairs in the Cevennes, the whole of France might have been conquered.[1] The Duke of Berwick is unable to understand how the English and Dutch could have been so lost to a sense of their own interests as to leave the Camisards destitute of capable leaders.[2] As we have already explained, nobody in England was more conscious of the opportunity than Godolphin, or was more anxious to seize it.

But Godolphin had enemies to contend with of whom Cavalier and Berwick knew nothing, and who

[1] Cavalier's *Memoirs*, p. 156.

[2] *Memoirs of Duke of Berwick.* Petitot's *Collection de Mémoires*, vol. lxvi. p. 32.

did their best to frustrate his schemes, whether of domestic policy or foreign conquest. He was in perpetual danger from the opposition of his own colleagues. Nottingham, as a leading member of the administration, should have been his staunchest and loyalest friend. He was nothing of the sort. He aimed at domination in the Cabinet, and was the dangerous and inveterate foe of his own leaders. Nottingham's position in Godolphin's Government furnishes us with a striking instance of the want of ministerial harmony in the reign of Queen Anne. At the present time such a condition of things could not exist for a moment; it would be intolerable, and would render any government unworkable. Nottingham systematically resisted every design which Godolphin and Marlborough desired to prosecute. He opposed Marlborough's system of conducting the war; he had already attempted to injure his colleagues by the introduction of the Occasional Conformity Bill, and he now obstructed Godolphin in his schemes for assisting the Camisards. The reason which he gave for his opposition is well worthy of descending as an example of the fanatical extent to which the Tory doctrines of passive obedience and non-resistance could be strained. The wretched people of the Cevennes were being roasted, frozen, tortured with red-hot irons, and driven mad by deprivation of sleep, yet because they were the acknowledged subjects of the King of France, Nottingham flatly refused to help them. Had England sent an army to Provence, Cavalier

assures us that France might have been ruined in two years. If this assertion was true, England had, by years of bloodshed, by the expenditure of millions of pounds, and finally by the conclusion of an unsatisfactory treaty, painfully to atone for the slavish adherence of a Tory statesman to a senseless and fanatical dogma.

Thus circumstances compelled Godolphin to abandon for the moment his project of carrying the war into the Cevennes; he did not, however, withdraw his attention from that quarter of Europe, but concentrated it upon Savoy.

The Duke of Savoy was in a condition of the most painful vacillation. The time had at length come when it was absolutely necessary for him to decide which of the belligerents he would join, and either alternative seemed to be attended with consequences almost equally dangerous. If he joined France, his small territory might become absorbed in the French monarchy; if he opposed her, it might be subdued by a French army. He did all in his power to delay the moment of decision, and while he pretended to favour the French he intrigued with Count d'Avesperg, the imperial ambassador, whom, for fear of the resentment of Lewis XIV., he immured in a royal fortress and compelled to live the life of a political hermit. The suspense which the conduct of the Duke of Savoy created was injurious to the affairs of the allies, and Godolphin was resolved to terminate it. He could not, he thought, do so in a better way

than by sending a competent and instructed envoy to the court of Savoy. With this object he directed Mr. Hill to repair to Turin.

Richard Hill, who for some years[1] represented the English Government at the court of Turin, deserves something more than a passing notice. His name is not, like that of Methuen, celebrated in the roll of great English ambassadors, and yet judging from his correspondence with the Lord Treasurer we should incline to think that Hill was as able a man as Methuen, and perhaps an even more successful diplomatist. The recollection, however, of Hill has to a great extent faded away, and his identity is confounded in modern historical works with that of the many Hills who were his contemporaries in the reign of Queen Anne. Hill was born of a good Staffordshire family. He was educated at Eton, and intended for the Church. He had already taken deacon's orders, when by chance he became known to Lord Ranelagh, who, observing his capacity for business, obtained for him the post of paymaster to the troops in Flanders. The merit of Hill attracted the attention and secured the favour of William III., while the condescension of William obtained in return the life-long affection of Hill. Upon the conclusion of the war in the Low Countries Hill was nominated one of the ministers to negotiate the Peace of Ryswick, and in 1701 he became a Commissioner of the Treasury.

[1] He was at Turin as envoy in 1703, see *Compleat History of Europe.*

In later life he took priest's orders and was elected a Fellow of Eton College. He does not, however, seem to have resided at Eton, but to have lived at Richmond, near London, in an unpretentious manner, though surrounded by the most eminent persons of the time. In his political opinions Hill somewhat resembled Godolphin. He was a Tory, but one of those Tories whom the Tory party would hardly own. He objected to the Tory foreign policy, and was attached to the Protestant succession. He was, in the parlance of the time, 'a Hanover Tory,' an expression which some declared to be a contradiction in terms and a monster in its production. Hill carried on a long and intimate correspondence with Godolphin. Like so many correspondences, half private half official, of this time, his letters are singularly pleasant and instructive reading. They present to us a man of shrewd sense, of correct judgment, and of somewhat humorous impressions. Far less in earnest than Methuen, he was probably a man of clearer insight into character, who took life more easily, and perhaps passed through it more successfully. His career was full of inconsistencies. Bred to the Church, he became a public servant and refused a bishopric; being a Tory he acted with the Whigs, and being a rich man he lived like a plain one.

The mission of Hill to Turin seems, as usual, to have been obstructed by Nottingham; Godolphin was anxious that Hill should arrive at Turin with the least possible delay. He impressed upon Not-

tingham that if the Duke of Savoy was 'balancing,'[1] as he called it, nothing would so probably turn the scale in favour of the allies as the friendly representations which Hill was entrusted to make on behalf of the English Government. The argument seems incontestable; yet the Pensioner of Holland attempted to detain Hill at the Hague till the Duke of Savoy's intentions were more clearly known, and the pains which Godolphin takes to explain to Nottingham the error of such a policy lead us to suppose that his observations were intended quite as much to convince the mind of his colleague as to disparage the plans of the Pensioner. Hill was politically objectionable to Nottingham. He was nominally a Tory, yet he differed from the Tories upon the cardinal question of the war, which at this time divided the Tories from the Whigs. It is not then surprising that Nottingham viewed Hill's appointment by Godolphin as envoy to the court of Turin with disfavour. He could not prevent it, he could not even seriously delay it, but he attempted to minimise its importance, and maintain his own influence abroad by appointing a friend of his own to another diplomatic post in Northern Italy. He appealed to Godolphin to send Matthew Prior on a mission to Venice.[2] Godolphin declined to accede to the request; he was probably as averse to the man, who was after-

[1] Additional MSS. 29589, f. 95, British Museum. Godolphin to Nottingham, August 19, 1703.

[2] Additional MSS. 29589, f. 153, British Museum. Godolphin to Nottingham, September 9, 1703.

wards his bitter opponent, as Nottingham was to Hill. He courteously turned the proposal aside, remarking that such affairs as had to be regulated at Venice might be left to Hill on his way to Turin. In spite of all opposition Hill reached Italy in August. He was received by the Duke of Savoy with a coldness as simulated as it was brief. On October 3, Victor Amadeus was informed that the French, suspecting his fidelity, had arrested a portion of his army; on the 4th the insulted sovereign took the only revenge which was in his power, and publicly declared his adhesion to the Grand Alliance. For several years Hill remained at Turin the trusted agent of Godolphin, and we shall have at a future page to revert to their correspondence.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE ACT OF SECURITY.

In 1704 an event occurred which marked the first of two important epochs in Godolphin's government. Nottingham retired from office; that he had retained it for two years is a happy illustration of the practice which brought elements of the most discordant character into the same administration. Nottingham was opposed to Godolphin and Marlborough upon nearly every point. His acts of insubordination, if we may call them by that name, had been many and serious, while the apprehension of his opposition must have caused as much inconvenience and anxiety as his declared hostility. Both at home and abroad he was an embarrassment to his colleagues, and Godolphin must have hailed his resignation with satisfaction.

There are two periods of main importance to be specially considered during the term of Godolphin's administration. Both are intimately connected with the plan of government which Godolphin had adopted, and which we have already tried to explain, and both show in different ways and at different progressive

stages how Godolphin's plan of government was acted upon by the natural laws affecting party government. The first epoch, marked by the resignation of Nottingham, we may style the shedding epoch, because the action of party began to dissolve the Government, and cause it to crumble away into fragments; the second epoch, which we assign to the period of Sunderland's accession to the administration, we may style the accretive epoch: for the work of dissolution had then for the most part been done, and the power of party, which had hitherto been spent in dissolving, was now employed on the work of reconstruction. It will also be recognised by any close observer that though Godolphin is often charged with being the author of the great political changes which characterise his period of office, they were, in fact, the work of evolution rather than that of any individual statesman, and the consequence of necessity rather than of choice.

The resignation of Nottingham was the first outward and visible sign of the dissolution of that scheme of government which it had been so fondly hoped would unite the queen's friends into a party distinct either from Whig or Tory. The great principle that two parties alone could exist in England for the purpose of government was beginning to assert itself. It began to dawn upon politicians that there was no half-way house between Whig and Tory. Nottingham found his situation in the administration intolerable, and he frankly represented to the queen

that if he was to remain in office she must make up her mind between a pure Whig or a pure Tory Government. He was not driven from office, as he well might have been, for his various offences against his colleagues; but he is the first example of those politicians who were congregated together into a government on the accession of Queen Anne voluntarily gravitating towards their natural point of attraction. As we proceed in our narrative it will appear how circumstances forced Godolphin in spite of himself, and often in spite of the most earnest exhortations of the queen and Marlborough, to follow the example of Nottingham and abandon a position which was perfectly untenable, only while Nottingham saved his political principles by leaving office, Godolphin remained in office by sacrificing what had always been considered his party opinions. The first and most important of these circumstances was the passage of the Act of Security which indirectly led to the Union between England and Scotland. No event in Godolphin's career more largely affected his future, or was more pregnant with happy results to the British empire.

The Act of Security passed by the Scotch Parliament was, as is well known, intended under certain circumstances to sever the Scotch from the English Crown. The bill proposed that on the death of Queen Anne without issue, the Estates should be debarred from choosing the admitted successor to the crown of England, unless there were to be such

a form of government settled as should fully secure the religion, freedom, and trade of the Scottish nation. In 1703 the queen placed her veto on the bill, but in 1704 Godolphin advised her to pass it into law. He has been severely censured for his advice upon this occasion, yet undoubtedly it led almost instantaneously to the most important and beneficial legislative act of last century, the Union between England and Scotland. To Godolphin's wisdom and firmness this great measure must be principally ascribed. Like many other benefactors of the human race, he received but little credit at the time for the accomplishment of a project which alone should render his reputation immortal among statesmen. Nor is there anything extraordinary in the apparent ingratitude of his contemporaries. He was attached to neither of the great parties of the State; they both, for the most opposite reasons, sought every opportunity of disparaging him; they only looked for points to criticise in his political conduct, and were ready to join in one overwhelming verdict of condemnation. But it is certainly extraordinary that modern historians have not done justice to Godolphin's patience and sagacity, to the resolution with which he confronted popular clamour whether in Edinburgh or in London, and to the unflagging industry which he displayed in prosecuting his great design. The bulky collection of letters from the leaders of the Scotch people to Godolphin, still preserved in the British Museum, attests the deep interest

which he took in the Union, the variety of sources of information which he consulted, and the purity of the motives by which he was actuated. Yet, in spite of Godolphin's eminent services in bringing about a peaceful settlement between the two countries when a bloody war seemed almost inevitable, those who study the histories of the time rise from their labours with a doubt as to how much Godolphin had to do with the Union at all; whether the statesman who risked his official existence on the success of his policy, who would in all probability have been impeached had his policy failed, whose head the exultant Wharton declared that the Whigs held in a halter, was not after all a Jacobite in disguise, whether his negotiations for a union were not a deep-laid scheme of villainy, and whether, to use the words of his detractors, 'he intended that for the public ruin, which God's providence had turned to the public good.'[1] Under these circumstances we shall enter, though chronologically a little out of place, more fully into the history of the Scotch Union, and Godolphin's connection with it, than we otherwise should have deemed necessary.

In 1704 the affairs of Scotland were in a state of great and hopeless depression. The union of the two crowns in the reign of James I. had with the lapse of time entailed disastrous consequences upon Scotland. She lost an individuality which, small as she was, had given her a distinct place among nations and

[1] Cunningham's *History of Great Britain*, p. 279.

rendered her mistress of her own destinies. In the days when her native monarchs reigned at Holyrood, Scotland had possessed all the attributes of a separate kingdom. Her ambassadors were, or might have been, found at every court. She entered into her own alliances, made her own wars, negotiated her own treaties, and in the conduct of her wars and in the conclusion of her treaties she had no interest to serve but that of her own people.

But the migration of the Scotch kings to London produced in many ways an unwholesome change in the state of Scotland. Her life became entangled with that of a richer and more powerful country without becoming absorbed into it. The connection infinitely weakened her; it created a new point of political and social gravitation, and Scotland was reduced from the dignity of a kingdom to the level of a distant and unfavoured province. In name, it is true, she remained independent, but in fact she was in real though disguised subordination to England. A collapse, both material and moral, accompanied the decay of national independence. Science and literature languished; commerce, manufactures, and population declined.[1] The social inequalities which must exist in every State became marked and offensive. The luxury of the rich was rendered more odious by com-

[1] March 4, 1704–5. Earl of Roxburghe to Godolphin: 'There is indeed such a scarcity of money here as never was known before; our trade almost quite gone, and any part of it that's left rather hurtful to us than advantageous.'—Additional MSS. 28055, f. 140, British Museum.

parison with the abject want of the poor. Had it not been for the most unfortunate circumstances, the Scotch might have found a remedy for the intolerable distress of their country by the exercise of those high qualities of enterprise, thrift, and perseverance which are so conspicuous a part of the national characteristics. Had the hands of the Scotch been free, they could at least have taken the place which they formerly occupied among the nations of Europe; they might even perhaps have done more; as with the Dutch, the astuteness of their traders might have won for them commercial pre-eminence, to which neither the size of their territory nor their population entitled them. But their hands were not free. The Scotch were chained to the policy of their powerful neighbour; and the connection with England was ruining them. They sought in trade a natural field for that spirit of enterprise which had no outlet at home; they found themselves confronted by the English navigation laws, and the spirit of exclusiveness which inspired the commercial system of England. The unhappy fate of the Darien expedition was the death-blow to the commercial aspirations of Scotland.[1] Henceforth it seemed to both her people and statesmen that there were but two remedies by which the prosperity of the country could be restored: either Scotland must be placed on a position of commercial equality with England, or a complete separation of Scotland from England was necessary;

[1] Somerville's *History of Queen Anne*, pp. 147, 149.

either Scotland must be permitted to share in the wealth of England—a wealth which, to a certain extent, was created by Scotch partnership—or the partnership must be dissolved, and the kingdom of Scotland be re-erected on its ancient basis. Nobody, we think, who weighs this matter impartially will doubt that the Scotch were perfectly justified in the attitude which they adopted.

The project of a union between England and Scotland was an old one; it had often been discussed, but it had never received much practical encouragement. It was the dream of statesmen who had the welfare of their country at heart, and who had eyes which could penetrate the clouds in which the real interests of two kindred nations were shrouded; but until the Act of Security was passed in 1704, it would be inaccurate to say that the prospect of a union was within measurable distance of accomplishment. The difficulties in the way of a union were enormous. Emotions, partly patriotic, partly selfish, opposed a barrier to its progress. Popular passion in both countries was deeply stirred. The English recoiled from the idea of admitting the Scotch to a commercial equality with themselves; the Scotch regarded the English with a hatred which had its origin in a sense of wrong no less than in national antipathy. 'Bad,' wrote Johnston[1] to Godolphin on his arrival in Edinburgh in 1704, 'as Scotch affairs

[1] Johnston had been Secretary of State for Scotland in the reign of William III., and was now Lord Register. Somerville's *History of Queen Anne*, p. 619.

are considered in London, I find them infinitely worse than I had reckoned.' [1]

Nor while there was discord among the people was there harmony among those statesmen who were favourable to the Union ; for while united in favouring the scheme of a union, they were disagreed as to the policy best calculated to bring it about. It was in the adoption of a policy that Godolphin most signally displayed his greatness, and in which he outshone all his contemporaries, not even excluding the renowned Somers. It was not the destination, but the path to the destination, which he indicated and pursued, and which, in spite of every evil prediction, led to the greatest legislative achievement of the age—the English and Scotch Union.

The passage of the Act of Security through the Scotch Parliament in 1703 and 1704 raised a point of great difficulty. The Act directly tended to a separation of the crowns. Would it be proper for the queen to consent to a measure the dangerous consequences of which were patent to almost every intelligent person ? The great bulk of politicians, whether favourable to a union or not, answered the question in the negative, and the anger of both Whigs and Tories was roused to the highest pitch when it became known that Godolphin had advised the queen to permit the bill to pass into law. Whether Godolphin deserves our respect as a liberal and far-sighted statesman, or whether we must regard him merely as

[1] Additional MSS. 28055, f. 78, British Museum.

a lucky blunderer, depends entirely upon the motives which prompted his advice. If it was given from a sense of timidity, because, to use the words of Lord Stanhope,[1] Godolphin always regarded 'the nearer evil as the worse,' he is convicted of pusillanimity almost amounting to crime ; if, on the other hand, its consequences were carefully and correctly calculated, it was an act of statesmanship which for its success and daring is almost without parallel in English history.[2]

In considering the motives which induced Godolphin to pass the Act of Security, we may fairly make the assumption that a statesman desires those results which his policy may naturally be expected to produce, and we may further affirm without possibility of contradiction that the Act of Security did naturally produce the Act of Union. This consideration is of itself sufficient to establish the presumption that the policy which led to the Union was one of design rather than of chance. But the more closely Godolphin's policy is studied the more apparent does it become that this policy, and this policy alone, could have brought about the Union. The policy was certainly one of concession, and of concession in the case of a bill which might have proved very injurious in its consequences ; but its enactment had the inestimable merit of confirm-

[1] Stanhope's *Queen Anne*, pp. 165, 166.

[2] Burton, in his *History of the Reign of Queen Anne*, vol. i. p. 165, says that Godolphin did not regret the Act of Security, hoping that dread of war might frighten the trading interest of England into compliance with the free trade demands of Scotland.

ing in the people of Scotland the conviction of their own independence, while, with the retaliatory measures it provoked from England, it happily illustrated the necessity of union. It is impossible to overestimate the importance, in the period preceding the Union, of the definite recognition by English statesmen of Scotch independence. It was the equality and independence of the contracting parties which made union possible. Had Godolphin agreed with most of his contemporaries—with men even so enlightened as Somers and Halifax ;[1] had he united with them in declaring that the Act of Security was a bad bill, and that it should not pass into law ; had he, in fact, advised the Crown of England, supported by the Parliament of England, to enter into a conflict with the people of Scotland, it is almost safe to predict that the Union would never have taken place, or at all events that it would never have taken place under such favourable auspices, as the Scotch, led away from considering the advantages of union, would have become involved in a great national controversy concerning their independence.

Godolphin, therefore, when he advised the queen to pass the Act of Security, rested his advice upon broad and generous lines of statesmanship, which it would be very difficult effectually to controvert. There were, however, arguments of expediency, as

[1] Swift says he remembers a conversation with Lord Somers in which Somers told him that the wrong management of the Earl of Godolphin in passing this bill was the only cause of the Union.—'Public Spirit of the Whigs :' *Swift's Works*, by Scott, vol. iv. p. 253.

well as of general policy, which no minister responsible for the order and good government of the country could pass over. In the first place, Godolphin was assured by the ministers in Scotland that it was absolutely essential for the peace of the country that the Act of Security should be passed. In the second place, it was a matter of doubt whether the Crown had the constitutional power of vetoing any bill which had received the consent of the Scotch Estates. As points of expediency and practice only we prefer to subordinate them to the larger question of the principle of government, yet we conceive that merely from their practical character, if nothing else, they deserve a consideration which they have not received from those who censure Godolphin for passing the Act of Security.

Nor do those who would deprive Godolphin of the credit of bringing about the Act of Union derive any advantage from the historical arguments which his enemies have arrayed against him. One faction attributed his policy to timidity, another to a wish to defeat the Hanoverian succession. These accusations conflict. The first assumes that Godolphin was so weak that he feared to resist a tumultuary expression of public opinion, the other that he was sufficiently courageous to adopt a policy which might, if discovered, have involved him in a charge of treason. He may have been timid, or he may have been bold and reckless, but he can hardly have been both. Nor, in spite of the reiterated charge of Jacobitism brought

against Godolphin, is there at this time a shadow of a proof of its foundation; on the contrary, it was the intrigues of Godolphin's colleague, the Whig Sunderland, a few years later with the Scotch Jacobites, which imperilled Godolphin's Government, and seriously affected Sunderland's own relations with the queen.

While the accusations against Godolphin appear baseless, there are positive as well as presumptive reasons for conjecturing that the Act of Security was advised by him as a portion of a premeditated scheme which was to lead to a union. The Act of Security was no sooner passed than Godolphin warmly supported a measure introduced into the English Parliament which in the first place empowered the queen to appoint commissioners to consider a union, and in the next declared that until the Crown of Scotland was settled in the same manner as the Crown of England, natives of Scotland should not be permitted to inherit lands in England; that wool, horses, arms, and ammunition should not be imported from England into Scotland; and that linen cloth, black cattle, sheep, coals, and salt should not be exported from Scotland into England.[1] The Act was designed to bring about a crisis, and it admirably answered its purpose. Both in England and Scotland preparations were made for putting the border fortresses in a condition of defence, and for marching troops to the frontier. England and

[1] 3 & 4 Anne, c. 7.

Scotland were placed in a position of military antagonism, and it became apparent to all by practical demonstration that the two nations must decide upon mutual concessions or upon civil war. The situation was one which was naturally full of alarm. Discussions were raised in Parliament, and Godolphin was violently attacked in the House of Lords. His defence—unfortunately but a fragment of it has been preserved—puts us largely in possession of his opinions; he admitted the wretched state of Scotland, he admitted the risks which were incurred by his policy, but he said the danger of refusing the royal sanction to the Act of Security was greater than the danger of giving it, 'and,' he added, 'whatever ill look it might have at present, it was not without remedy.'[1] The remedy to which Godolphin alluded is unmistakable. He could have meant nothing but a union. The queen was present during these debates. Her presence restrained the violence of party acrimony, and afforded some shelter to her persecuted minister. Her behaviour had indeed been from the first cordial and generous. At an early period of the crisis she had sent Prince George to Godolphin with the friendly assurance that she intended to stand by him. Godolphin's answer is

[1] Mr. Vernon to the Duke of Shrewsbury, December 8, 1704 : Somerville's *History of Queen Anne*. Godolphin, however, did not seem to dread an outbreak. He thus, in November 1706, contemptuously writes to Queensberry of his opponents in Scotland, 'they are the first people that ever I knew in a fixed intention of going into an open rebellion who thought fit to make so public a declaration of it beforehand.'—Additional MSS. 6420, British Museum.

brusque, quaint, and, if it was not embellished by some unrecorded words of thanks, churlish. He is reported to have exclaimed 'that neither the queen, nor His Royal Highness, nor anybody else can tell what a Parliament will do.' Many years' experience had deeply impressed Godolphin with the fickleness and uncertainty of Parliaments.

From his colleagues Godolphin received no assistance in developing a policy which was at once troublesome, unpopular, and dangerous. From Harley at least, who joined the Government in 1704, when feeling in regard to the Act of Security ran high, some support might have been hoped. The energy of a new minister, combined with a natural sentiment of loyalty for a new chief, might have been expected to induce him to enter zealously into the designs of the Lord Treasurer. But this was not the case. Harley's fatal passion for intrigue which so disastrously influenced the latter end of Godolphin's administration, made itself conspicuous on the Scotch question before he had been for a quarter of a year a member of the Government. When Harley became Secretary of State no man was more competent to inform him concerning the condition of Scotland than Johnston. Johnston held a high post in the Scotch Government; he was in frequent and confidential correspondence with Godolphin, and in full possession of Godolphin's opinions. Johnston voluntarily proposed to impart his knowledge to the new minister. Harley eagerly embraced the offer, but on being told

by Johnston that Godolphin must be made acquainted with the correspondence, he allowed the suggestion to drop, and Johnston heard of him no more.[1] Johnston, rightly or wrongly, was obviously of opinion that Harley was opposed to the designs which Godolphin was promoting for the good of the nation. Johnston's suspicions are confirmed by the history of a later date. How four years afterwards Harley succeeded in jeopardising the Union, how he induced the House of Commons to pass a resolution forbidding Scotch imports under certain circumstances, how Godolphin hurried up from the country to counteract in Parliament the disingenuous tactics of his colleague, and how from that day forth a sense of bitterness sprang up between the two statesmen, are facts generally well known to readers of the history of Queen Anne's reign. They, however, recall to our recollection the infinite difficulties which beset the path of Godolphin in carrying out his great design—difficulties which were promoted no less by false friends than by open enemies.

The union was at length effected, and no time can obliterate its beneficial results. The happiness and prosperity which it has established, the peace which it has bestowed, the blood which it has saved, combine to make it the greatest legislative monument which any statesman has erected to perpetuate his own memory. Many of the evils predicted of it were

[1] Additional MSS. 28055, f. 103, British Museum, July 19, 1704. Johnston to Godolphin.

discovered to be as intangible as shadows, mere webs of parliamentary sophistry spun out to defeat a distasteful measure, and were dissipated by the first breath of reality ; others again were found to be real, and it required time to mitigate them. But in reading the history of the Scotch and English Union nothing strikes us so strongly as the extraordinary parallel it affords with modern times. What was being said and done in the beginning of the eighteenth century is being said and done now that we are nearly approaching the end of the nineteenth century. The great inconvenience, we might almost say the great danger, of the existence of a party in Parliament which subordinated every question of politics to the achievement of a particular end, which regarded every act of government with the vigilant and hostile eye of a foreigner rather than with the discriminating judgment of a citizen, inspired our fathers, as they do ourselves, with gloomy anticipations. It would, however, be out of place to enter here into a comparison between the epochs, interesting as such a study would be, and we shall conclude our observations on the Union by quoting the following extract from a letter of a nameless writer to Godolphin, describing the factions into which the Scotch members were divided and containing a forecast of their probable action in the British Parliament. 'That which makes these forty-five from Scotland, though thus broken up among themselves, not only different from, but more dangerous than any like number among the

English, is that these three divisions . . . will, while influenced as now they are, forget their own animosities, and unite as one man, and that without any regard to the common good of the whole United Kingdom.'[1]

We have dwelt at some length on the circumstances which brought about the Union as they largely affected Godolphin's career, but in so doing we have somewhat anticipated events and must return again to 1704. The year ended in intense political bitterness. In the House of Lords a violent attack was made by Lord Haversham upon Godolphin's extravagance. The country, he declared, was rapidly becoming ruined by the gigantic quantities of coin which were being constantly exported from England for the purpose of defraying the foreign subsidies. He affected to regard the drain upon the specie currency with terror. The paper notes which were freely circulated he looked upon as a mere artifice to disguise the real bankruptcy of the nation. France, he said, might be beaten, but England would certainly be beggared unless some limit was put upon this prodigious and wasteful extravagance. Haversham's real object of attack was the war, but as the war was popular it was safer and more convenient to assail the expenditure which was necessary to maintain it. Godolphin observed the disingenuousness of the reasoning and exposed it. 'It would not

[1] Additional MSS. 28055, f. 426, British Museum. June 18, 1709 (no name), to Godolphin.

be difficult,' he said, 'to demonstrate that there never was so great a plenty of money in England, as at present, yet there was a sure way to increase that plenty, and prevent the exportation of coin, and that was by clapping up a peace with France. But then I leave it to the consideration of any wise man, whether we shall not thereby be shortly in danger of losing not only all our coin, but all our land to boot.'[1]

The accusations launched against Godolphin by his parliamentary opponents found no echo in the country. The queen and people united to express their approbation of the able manner in which in times of the greatest difficulty he had managed the affairs of the nation. The queen created him a Knight of the Garter, the first Knight of the Garter since the accession of the Stewarts who had received that honour, beneath the rank of an earl. The people inscribed his name in the addresses which greeted the conqueror of Blenheim, and thanked heaven for having provided them with a statesman whose frugal administration might induce the country almost to believe itself at peace, but for the fame of victories abroad.

While Godolphin was thus negotiating treaties and managing parties, his attention was often engaged in matters of smaller importance. Yet it is sometimes the small and even insignificant matters in history which supply us with the power of understanding the times and of adjusting the proportion of the various

[1] Cobbett's *Parliamentary History*, vol. vi. p. 371.

objects which we have under our eye. An example of the simplicity of even educated men in the reign of Queen Anne may be found in the following narrative.

In November, 1704, a curious communication reached Godolphin from Lord Raby, the English ambassador at Berlin. Lord Raby announced that he had made a startling discovery, and one which was sure to excite the interest of the Lord Treasurer. He pretended that he had discovered a man who could extract gold from silver. It seems incredible that only one hundred and eighty years ago an English ambassador of talent and cultivation should have ventured to suggest to one of the ablest and soundest financiers of the age, an idea worthy of the 'Arabian Nights,' or which even a highly educated child of the present day would resent as a levity if it found place in its story-book. Lord Raby's discovery was not only communicated in all seriousness to Godolphin, but it was seriously listened to by him, and the Lord Treasurer of England seems to have been partially imposed upon by a scheme which would not now deceive the veriest gull, or be promoted by the most daring bubble company. From a mark of pure silver worth fifty shillings Lord Raby averred that there could be produced every two months a ducat of gold. The value of the silver was not even to be diminished. Thus, given an income of 2,400*l.* a year, he proves to the Lord Treasurer that the new method of extracting gold would yield an annual income of 5,315*l.* 12*s.* in

addition to the principal of 2,400*l.*[1] The process sounds so similar to some of our most familiar conjuring tricks, so much more suitable to the mysterious gloom of the Egyptian Hall than to the solemn and precise offices of the Treasury, that it is impossible to read of this grave proposal without a smile. Lord Raby himself expresses some apprehension of Godolphin's incredulity, but, having seen the application of the process, he declared that a man must be mad who did not believe in it. Godolphin was so much impressed by Lord Raby's intelligence that he laid the plan before an expert, and received in reply the following very curious letter. The writer, having stated his opinion that Lord Raby and perhaps also the inventor were deceived, writes as follows :—'I can tell your lordship what was a very great trade for many years, and I believe the memory of it is now worn out with the occupation, but it lasted many years during my grandfather being Master of the Mint. That was this. Upon the first discovery of the Spanish mines, particularly those in Peru, the plate being brought home and generally stamped on board the galleons, and there being also great quantities of gold, through want of care and the art of refining, there hardly came any silver home which had not a mixture of gold, and the separation of it was kept a great and advantageous secret for many years ; by which great sums were gained, sometimes to twenty per cent., scarce ever under six ; but I

[1] Additional MSS. 28056, f. 196, British Museum.

suppose the Spaniards are too knowing now to leave room for this experiment. I trouble your lordship with this because it is a matter of curiosity, which scarce any one else but myself now knows.'[1] It was decided that the inventor should come to England to try his skill, while Godolphin playfully wrote to Raby thanking him for a discovery which was sure to make his fortune.[2]

[1] Additional MSS. 28056, f. 200, British Museum.

[2] Spence in his *Anecdotes* tells us of another strange proposal which was made to Godolphin while Lord Treasurer; he says 'the Jews offered Lord Godolphin 500,000*l.* (and they would have made it a million) if the Government would have allowed them to purchase the town of Brentford with leave of settling there entirely, with full privileges of trade, &c. The agent of the Jews said that the affair was already concerted with the chief of their brethren abroad, that it would bring the richest of their merchants hither, and an addition of 20,000,000*l.* of money to circulate in the nation. Lord Molesworth was in the room with Lord Godolphin when this proposal was made, and as soon as the agent was gone pressed him to close with it. Lord Godolphin was not of this opinion. He foresaw that it would provoke two of the most powerful bodies in the nation, the clergy and the merchants. He gave other reasons, too, against it, and in fine it dropped.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### SUNDERLAND JOINS THE GOVERNMENT.

In 1705 the current of political events continued to draw Godolphin with ever-increasing power towards the Whigs. It is interesting to observe how the impossibility of maintaining the political attitude which he had at first so deliberately assumed was gradually but certainly forced upon him, how the hostility of the Tories drove him upon the Whigs, how the support of the Whigs inflamed the rage of the Tories, and how the Whigs from being a crutch, as in the elegant parlance of these days they might be called, became his masters, as crutches must become to people who are not able to dispense with them. Godolphin's path bristled with difficulties. His advance towards the Whigs was barred by the queen, and by the inclinations of a Tory Parliament. Yet the Whigs imperatively beckoned him forward, and railed at him for not advancing more rapidly. Between Whig and Tory, Godolphin was almost torn in two. No wonder, if at times expressions of impatience burst from his lips, and he entertained a weary longing to escape from the perils and labours of office.

The impatience of the Whigs to compel Godolphin to admit them to office was natural; they only demanded the wages of their service; but the

enmity of the Tories was characterised by every mark of party factiousness and rancour. In their efforts to overthrow Godolphin's Government, they not only lost sight of the interests of the country, but they were so blinded by passion that they were actually incapable of perceiving what was best for themselves. In 1705 they thought that they saw their way to place Godolphin on the horns of a dilemma. They introduced into Parliament a Bill, called the Regency Bill, the ostensible object of which was to secure the residence in England of the next Protestant successor to the throne. The real motive of the Tories was simply to embarrass Godolphin and his Whig supporters. They felt no attachment for the heir-presumptive; they entertained no extravagant affection for the manner in which the crown was settled; many of them cared much more for the Pretender than for the Duchess Sophia; but they thought that the Whigs and Godolphin by opposing the Bill would offend the people, and that by accepting it they would offend the queen.

Godolphin evaded the difficulty which the Tories had prepared for him by bringing Bills into Parliament securing the succession to the Crown of Hanover, and constituting regents in case of a demise of the Crown while the heir to the throne was abroad. Seven regents were named, seven high officers of State, the Lord Treasurer among them. It is difficult to comprehend what other persons could properly have been joined together in the commission. Yet the Lord

Treasurer's name was no sooner published as one of the regents, than the Tories raised an outcry, and even proposed a motion in Parliament for the purpose of procuring its omission. The motion was rejected with the scorn it deserved.[1] The Tories were bitterly disappointed. They had designed to crush Godolphin, and the sole result of their machinations was a measure to clothe him with honour and power. Dartmouth declared that the bill which appointed Marlborough and Godolphin regents was framed by the ministers with the conviction that they would never lose the favour of the queen; and that they wished to establish their power after her death. 'But providence,' he sanctimoniously observes, 'interposed sometimes in their double dealing.' There is not the slightest ground for accrediting Godolphin and Marlborough with a policy so far-seeing and so far-fetched. The queen in 1705 was in the prime of life and many years younger than either Marlborough or Godolphin. There was every reason to suppose that her term of existence might be prolonged beyond that of her ministers. Moreover, we know now, what perhaps was a secret to Dartmouth, that the intercourse at that time between the queen and Godolphin was not by any means unruffled, and that already the influence of the Duchess of Marlborough was declining. Dartmouth's reproach is, therefore, unjust, and can only find excuse in the misconceptions which at all times and in all countries have blinded the eyes of even honest men when

[1] Burnet, vol. v. p. 230.

plunged in political controversy. Godolphin has not escaped the misrepresentations which universally attend the path of statesmen. Were we to depict him in the unadulterated colours of contemporary Tory writers and speakers, we should indeed have to exhibit a repulsive picture to the world. A monster of ingratitude, faithless to the Crown and to the Church, a perpetrator of past treasons, yet plotting new ones, a citizen who had debauched his country by bribery, whose life was a tissue of duplicity, and whose words were a cloud of prevarication : such is the loathsome portrait which we should have to ask our readers to contemplate. Fortunately for men, the actions which survive them supply a more veracious testimony to their character than pages of obloquy and abuse, of eulogy and panegyric.

The furious attacks which the Tories made upon Godolphin bore their natural fruit. The Lord Treasurer was forced more and more to rely upon the Whigs. The Whigs, however, were no longer prepared to support him for nothing. They determined to oblige him to admit them to a full share of the government, or they made up their minds to crush him. Both Whig and Tory party were thus leagued against him. It only remained to be seen which would strike the first blow, whether the fatal thrust was to be delivered by Nottingham or by Rochester, by Halifax or by Somers.

But an event had occurred in the spring of 1705 which enabled Godolphin to change his tactics and

save himself from undoubted ruin. A dissolution of Parliament had taken place. The House of Commons which had been elected in 1702 had been ruled by a Tory majority. Manifestations of its partisanship had not been wanting. It had on more than one occasion come into collision with the Whig House of Lords ; it had gone so far as to give a petty emphasis to its political opinions by absurdly attempting to class the indecisive battle which Rooke fought against the French off Malaga with Marlborough's great and immortal victory at Blenheim, a contrast which only served to render the Tory admiral ridiculous. But in 1705 its triennial life expired, and a thoroughly Whig House reigned in its stead. It is impossible to help being struck by the small causes which rule great events. Had the life of Queen Anne's Parliament been septennial, as have been the lives of almost every Parliament since, how different might have been the history of England, how changed would have been the career of Godolphin!

The triumph of the Whigs at the poll saved Godolphin's Government from catastrophe. With the Tories reconciliation was impossible, with the Whigs an alliance was not only possible but desirable. As yet Godolphin had approached the Whigs with the most cautious deliberation. He had accepted their services, he had acted with them, but he had conferred upon them no share in the counsels of the Government, and had left their support, though absolutely indispensable, inadequately rewarded. The Whigs

had murmured, and perhaps not unnaturally murmured, at the Lord Treasurer's ingratitude. Taking into consideration, however, the wishes of Marlborough and the queen, it is doubtful whether before the dissolution of Parliament he could have done more than he had done to demonstrate his thanks or his preference. He had removed Rooke from the Admiralty, and had filled his place with the Whig Sir Cloudesley Shovel; Buckingham also had been dismissed from office; more than this before the elections we feel convinced that the queen would not have tolerated. But the return to Westminster of a Whig Parliament absolutely altered the political situation. What was before only a matter of policy became now an absolute necessity, and Godolphin had to choose betweeen admitting the Whigs to a share of power, or being forced from office by those who were practically his own supporters. The matter was one which neither admitted of, nor required, delay. When Parliament met, it was announced that Sir Nathan Wright had been dismissed, and that he had been succeeded in the office of Lord Keeper by the distinguished Whig lawyer Mr. William Cowper, afterwards Lord Cowper. The Whigs were for the moment pacified. Their threatened opposition to Godolphin was withdrawn, and his Government, which before the meeting of Parliament appeared in a condition to the last degree precarious, was established more firmly than ever.

But if the Whigs were satisfied it was not for

long, and the spring of 1706 had scarcely set in before they gave evidence of an unquenched desire for office. They were fully and correctly impressed with a sense of their own power and importance. The existence of the Government, the continuance of the war, all and everything they thought depended upon their good will. It could hardly be expected that a great political party would consent to be servants of the ministers, slaves of the lamp as it were, to work out the inclinations of the queen, to provide honours and fortunes for others, and not seek some share in the administration, or participation in its advantages. Their service demanded solid recognition, and they were determined that if the queen would not recompense them spontaneously, she should be compelled to do so by force. Nor, tried by modern practice of government, is it possible to blame them. Responsibility and power are in these days inseparably chained together. Those who in fact rule are those also who fill positions which render their occupants responsible for their acts. Custom has long regarded this as an axiom in politics, and there is nobody now who will not consider that the claims of the Whigs were just, reasonable, and expedient. What is a truism to us had become equally true to Godolphin from experience.[1] The Whigs possessed the power to control the course of government, and

[1] Godolphin to Harley, August 10, 1706. 'The topics you mention would not hurt us alone, if there were not a preparation to make those uneasy and jealous [alluding to Somers, Halifax, and the Whigs] from whom only we can have, or hope for any friendship.'—*Hardwicke Papers.*

nothing short of his own fall, and perhaps not even that, could exclude them from the administration. Godolphin was quite convinced that the Government could not exist a day without their support, and only existed at all by their favour. The Whigs alone supported the war, and passed those votes in supply without which it must expire from sheer inanition. The Whigs alone preserved the country from sectarian intolerance, and from political confusion. Moreover, personal experience had persuaded Godolphin not only of the utility of their friendship, but of its very necessity. They had protected him when he had been attacked by the Tories, and he owed his personal no less than his official safety to their exertions. If the war was really to be carried on, if he was in truth not to lay down the white staff, it was quite apparent to him that both on grounds of policy and interest the Whigs must be called upon to take a share in the government.

The great obstacle to an arrangement which seemed at once so natural and so essential had hitherto been the inclinations of Marlborough and the queen. But in the winter of 1705 the eyes of Marlborough began to open, and he himself to perceive that the war which he had cherished so fondly, and which he still considered of such paramount importance to the happiness of England and the liberties of Europe, would surely die unless a Whig was placed in the Cabinet. But it is one thing to express a general opinion, and another to give it a practical application.

Where could the Whig be found who would prove acceptable to Marlborough and the queen? The Whig party proposed the Earl of Sunderland, the son of that Lord Sunderland who had played so leading a part in the last three reigns, and Marlborough's son-in-law, and the office they asked for him was that of Secretary of State.

The selection of Sunderland by the Whigs was due to his relationship with Marlborough coupled with his high rank and distinguished name. If a coalition was to be formed it would, no doubt, it was thought, be agreeable to the Government that it should not have the appearance of a capitulation. Sunderland, though a political enemy, was still a member of the 'family,' as the ministerial connection between Godolphin and Marlborough was offensively styled. He could be received into the bosom of the Cabinet with none of the mortification which would attend the violent intrusion of a stranger. There was nothing in the appointment to shock the public mind, or to attach to the Government the discredit of defeat. Yet wise and even conciliatory as was the nomination, it pleased neither Godolphin nor Marlborough. Godolphin had little personal esteem for Sunderland. Marlborough disliked his politics and dreaded the opposition of the queen. The political necessity was, however, stern and pressing. Godolphin reluctantly assented to the arrangement. Marlborough still faltered and hesitated.

Sunderland was, indeed, a person whom no minister could accept as a colleague without repug-

nance. Of all the statesmen of Queen Anne's reign he was perhaps the least amiable and the least attractive. He was narrow, harsh, insolent, arrogant, the very incarnation of that spirit of party independence which affects to display its liberty by rude attacks on social superiority, while it is sunk in ignominious submission to some contracted political principle. He was ambitious, but his ambition was personal rather than patriotic. He performed one act, at least, which was noble, but it is doubtful whether it was not prompted as much by pride as by magnanimity. He was an intriguer like his father, but he had none of the qualities which rendered his father's designs seductive. Where his father fawned and crept, he raged and stormed. His temper was so bad that he has been called the most passionate man of his time. Lord Holland once asked Sir Robert Walpole why it was that he had never come to an understanding with Sunderland. Walpole replied that had he hinted at such a thing Sunderland would assuredly have thrown him out of the window. Perhaps no statesman of the period has left behind him so many examples of his arrogance. It is told of him that on one occasion when invited to form a ministry he requested Sir James Lowther to call at his house with the intention of offering him office. The hour for the interview came but not the man. Twice Sunderland rang the bell and asked if anybody had called. Twice the servant answered in the negative, adding,

however, the second time that an old man, somewhat wet, was sitting by the fireside in the hall, who he supposed had some petition to deliver to his lordship. 'When he went out it proved to be Sir James Lowther. Lord Sunderland desired him to be sent about his business, saying that no such mean fellow should sit in his treasury.'[1] This episode in the formation of a Government in the eighteenth century is worthy of immortalisation. We see it still. The haughty peer looking half out of his library door, the rich and humble baronet crouching over the fire, the wave of the hand with which the doom was accompanied, the doom itself pronounced in the presence of the culprit, but conveyed to him through the medium of the footman—no laboured narrative could demonstrate so effectually as this brief but characteristic anecdote the vast social and political differences which exist between the past age and the present.

But Sunderland had other faults besides those of a bad temper. He was inconsistent in politics, not from the natural development of one set of opinions into another, but from the merest motives of caprice. The friend of Somers, he lived to correspond with Atterbury ; the prop of the Hanoverian succession, to be courted by the Jacobites ; the uncompromising foe of Rochester and Buckingham, to become a favourite toast with the Tories. In 1706, however, the lights which subsequent history has shed on his character were altogether wanting. His capacity

[1] Fitzmaurice's *Life of the Earl of Shelburne*, vol. i. p. 34.

for government was as yet untried, and though in the violence of his partisanship he was almost brutal, the constancy of his party fidelity had not been tested.

But even at this early time Sunderland gave little promise of ever becoming a great statesman. His politics were of that purely party character which is generally symptomatic either of great narrowness of vision, or of great selfishness. They were neither purified by any lofty aspiration to establish some great and beneficial principle, nor corrected by that historical knowledge or that interest in the contemporary affairs of other States which does much to impart a just appreciation of matters closely connected with ourselves. Party triumphs and party defeats were the sole objects which came within the limited sphere of his political horizon. Already this was apparent. In 1705 he had been sent on a mission to Vienna. The negotiations which he had to conduct were of the greatest importance; the statesmen with whom he had to transact business were persons who held the destinies of Europe in their hands. But Sunderland found no pleasure outside the political atmosphere of London. He pined to return home, and he had scarcely left England two months before he wrote to Godolphin saying that he would rather be buried alive than be left any longer in Vienna.[1]

Such in brief was Sunderland's character, and it is perhaps not wonderful that both Godolphin and Marlborough shrank from pressing his appointment

[1] Additional MSS. 28056, f. 321, British Museum.

on the queen. But Godolphin was convinced that, disagreeable as the step might be, it was necessary to take it, if the Government was to be preserved and the war continued. He urged his opinion upon Marlborough, who had hitherto hoped that political events would incline the queen naturally to the Whigs without external pressure. If the Whigs would only wait, Marlborough felt certain that the places which they coveted so much would be theirs, not wrung from the queen by force, but most freely and graciously bestowed. But the Whigs were not prepared to wait, the issues before the Government were pressing and could not be postponed, and Marlborough at length gave way; in August he declared that he would submit to the judgment of the Lord Treasurer—to use his own words, that he would rather be governed than govern; and it was decided that the queen should be asked to remove Sir Charles Hedges from the post of Secretary of State, and to establish Sunderland in his place.

The moment for making the request was not inauspicious. For the first time in her reign the queen in 1705 showed marked dissatisfaction with the Tories. During the autumn of that year the Tories had seriously and factiously disturbed the peace of Parliament. They had insisted that the Church was in danger when the queen was perfectly satisfied that its safety rested upon a firm and solid foundation. They had attempted to establish her successor in England after having on a previous occasion solemnly

warned her that whoever sought to adopt such a measure must wish in his heart to depose her. They had permitted themselves to use language not only about her, but actually before her face, which filled her with justifiable indignation. The queen was indeed highly incensed; never had she evinced such resentment against those whom she had hitherto deemed the surest prop of Church and Crown; never had she cast upon the Whigs such flattering glances of approval. Moreover, she had every reason to be contented with her Government, and to support her ministers. The circumstances of the country were prosperous, the war popular, she herself beloved. The most skilful general of the age commanded her armies, and levied his annual tribute of victory upon the enemy. The greatest financier whom England had ever possessed regulated the finances, and converted a period of lavish expenditure into a season of exuberant abundance. The payments of the Treasury were unprecedentedly punctual, the credit of the country extraordinarily high.[1] Only ten years before Bank of England notes had been discounted at twenty per cent., tallies at forty, fifty, and sixty per cent.,[2] now loans could be obtained without difficulty at something between four and five per cent.[3] Both at

[1] Coxe's *Life of Marlborough*, vol. i. p. 378. See also Cobbett's *Parliamentary History*, vol. vi. p. 513.

[2] Cobbett's *Parliamentary History*, vol. v. p. 1156 (1696).

[3] Godolphin to Marlborough, October 4, 1706. Coxe's *Life of Marlborough*. In a pamphlet on the 'State of the National Debt,' published in 1727, it is alleged that in the heat of the war Godolphin did not for the services at home pay above 4 per cent. or $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

home and abroad the queen was indeed fortunate; and her fortune was chiefly due to the sagacity of her Government. The ministers who had thus faithfully served her, who had raised her almost to the pinnacle of greatness, and who had already made her reign one of the most brilliant in English history, now implored her for their sakes and her own to admit into the Cabinet a statesman whom she indeed abhorred, but whose presence was necessary for the salvation of the Government. It seemed not impossible that the queen might vouchsafe a gracious and satisfactory reply. But in this natural hope the ministers were disappointed. She returned a firm and unequivocal refusal.

The opposition of the queen to the appointment of Sunderland was perhaps not unexpected by Godolphin; but the persistency with which she adhered to it alarmed him. She declared that Sunderland's temper was unbearable, that the conduct of the Whigs was unreasonable. Why, she asked, was she who had but one object in life, the welfare and happiness of her people, to receive no consideration in the choice of her ministers? 'Why, for God's sake, must I who have no interest, no end, no thought, but for the good of my country, be made so miserable, as to be brought into the power of one set of men.'[1] She begged, she implored Godolphin, not for her sake, not even for his own, but for the sake of Jesus Christ to save her

[1] Queen Anne to Godolphin, $\frac{\text{August } 30}{\text{September } 10}$, 1706. Coxe's *Life of Marlborough*.

from the terrible misfortune of having to accept Sunderland as Secretary of State, and to preserve her from the hands of those who would reduce her sovereignty to a shadow, and herself to the condition of a slave ; and as the contest continued, and as she felt herself worsted in the strife, she offered to receive Sunderland into the Cabinet if only he would consent to serve without an office, and thus save her from his hated presence. The great screw of party was beginning to torture the queen. She groaned under it, and her lamentations will find an echo in the heart of every sovereign whose rule is shared by a Parliament. She appealed to the scheme by which she was to govern neither by Whig nor by Tory, not 'tied to one nor the other' ; but she appealed in vain, for the instrument of Godolphin and Marlborough was broken, and they knew that it had failed. But the queen had still to learn the lesson which experience had already taught her ministers, which a history of many years was insufficient to impress upon her successor George III., that the strength of the Crown is as nothing compared to the strength of a triumphant party, and that the sovereign can no more dispense with the support of either the Whigs or the Tories than he can dispense with Parliament and issue decrees like the Czar of Russia or the Sultan of Turkey.

The entreaties and remonstrances of the queen threw Godolphin into despair. He exhausted his arguments upon her without the slightest effect ; he

contended, and with reason, that were the ministers to adopt her own suggestion and introduce Sunderland into the Cabinet as a minister without an office, the public would certainly think that the Whigs had compelled her to take him against her will. He pointed out to her the inconsistency of imploring him to remain by her as an adviser while, in an affair of the last importance, she refused to follow the advice which he offered. With perfect frankness he explained to her that till the Whigs had power they would be against everything which could be of assistance to her service ; that she might change her policy and her present Government if she liked, but if her ministers were not to go out, Sunderland must come in. All reasoning, however, was vain ; every attempt to convince her only ended in failure, and provoked fresh outbreaks of distress. Godolphin was deeply touched [1] by the queen's affliction. He could not agree with her, but he did everything in his power to save her from the consequences of her errors, and silently received from the indignant Whigs, who suspected his sincerity in their cause, the censure which would otherwise have fallen on his mistress. The letter to Marlborough, in which he excuses the vehemence of the Whig attacks upon himself, is almost pathetic in its simple tone of generosity : 'not that I think them so much to blame, because they do really not see the difficulties as they are, and one cannot go about to show them those difficulties without too much

[1] Godolphin to Duchess of Marlborough, September 14, 1706.

exposing the queen.[1] But with all Godolphin's forbearance, the terms which he was upon with the queen became unendurable. Personal meetings, which were productive of nothing, were followed by written communications which were equally fruitless, till, in the commencement of September, Godolphin announced his intention to resign.

The announcement of Godolphin's proposed resignation filled every one with alarm. The queen, Marlborough, the Whigs themselves were equally concerned in his remaining in office. Had Godolphin wished merely to measure his own importance by the consternation which his resignation would provoke, he could hardly have hit upon a happier expedient. With such conduct he was frequently charged by his enemies. No impartial person could, we think, seriously charge him with it on this occasion. Godolphin was indeed thoroughly tired of office. He was growing old and frail, and more than ever pining for country solitude ; life was slipping away, and yet that peaceful vision of rural repose which he had dreamed in his youth was unrealised. Moreover he saw many of his old friends dropping away from him. The friends of his youth were Tories ; he was too old to make friends among the Whigs ; to whichever side he turned he was the mark of envy, detraction, and hatred, and he could not endure it.

Whatever might be said by Godolphin's enemies, it is certain that the queen and Marlborough were

[1] Coxe's *Life of Marlborough*, vol. ii. p. 7, September $\frac{10}{21}$.

fully convinced of the sincerity of his resolution. The queen, in language which is rarely employed by a sovereign to a subject, implored him to alter his cruel intention, that she might not be lost and utterly undone. Marlborough's dismay was equal to the queen's, and probably more genuine. He considered that the resignation of Godolphin, if it came to pass, would amount to a national and continental catastrophe; the affairs of the queen would be hopelessly disturbed, the liberties of Europe irretrievably lost; at foreign courts nobody had so high a reputation as Godolphin; at home there was not a single person who could supply his place. One more campaign and Marlborough had trusted to terminate the war triumphantly, now a treacherous and slippery peace would be concluded. It was hard that success should be thus snatched from the country at the very moment of achievement. Already Marlborough descried the rainbow of peace suspended in the dark clouds of war, and he predicted with certainty that soon his own toil and that of his friend would be ended, and that the time was at hand when they might honourably seek a well-earned retirement.

History has been fond of placing Godolphin in a position very secondary to Marlborough, of treating him as a confidential agent or an honest and industrious head clerk who executed at home the policy which Marlborough directed from abroad. Marlborough's letters are a complete refutation of

this mistaken notion. They afford a striking proof of Godolphin's intrinsic and independent value. Every line proves that Marlborough looked upon Godolphin as another self, as a person whose genius was as transcendent in politics as his own was in war. But the letters bear other testimony still than this. They are evidence of the extraordinary friendship which existed between two of the greatest men of the age. They display a love and sympathy which is rarely witnessed between men in any station, and more rarely still between men occupying the most exalted offices in the State. To retire from public life and live at Woodstock with the Duchess and Godolphin was the future which it was the solace of Marlborough's leisure moments to contemplate. Godolphin's troubles wrung Marlborough's heart. While they continued he resisted with the most creditable forbearance to ask for the smallest favour. The object of his life was his settlement at Woodstock, yet rather than impose a burthen on his friend he would have consented never to live there. 'I do pity him, and shall love him,' wrote Marlborough, 'as long as I live, and never will be a friend to any that is his enemy.[1]' Words could not more strikingly convey the earnestness of the friendship which existed between Marlborough and Godolphin, and the consternation with which Marlborough contemplated the proposed resignation of his colleague. Nor, after all, did Godolphin resign. The concessions of

[1] Coxe's *Life of Marlborough.*

the queen rendered such a course unnecessary. She was no longer able to resist the joint remonstrances of Godolphin and of Marlborough, who in the early winter returned from the continent, and on December 3, the very day of the meeting of Parliament, Sunderland was nominated Secretary of State. Outwardly all relapsed again into harmony and repose. The Whigs were flattered with honours. Godolphin himself was created an Earl ; but, as a matter of fact, a wound was inflicted on the friendship of the queen with her ministers which never healed, and which, in the fulness of time, was followed by fatal consequences.

Through the whole of this dispute the queen was incontestably in the wrong. It was open to her to change her ministers and her foreign policy if she chose ; but it was not her wish at the moment to do either one or the other. Politically, she was supposed, in 1706, to be in complete unanimity with her ministers, and nobody suspected her of desiring a peace ; yet without the Whigs, and therefore without Sunderland, a peace was certain. If she intended to pursue the war, as she repeatedly said she did, it was against sound sense to object to the elevation to office of the only party in the State which would carry it on. Nor, under the circumstances, was the price which she was asked to pay for the furtherance of her own policy a high one. The Whigs might have extorted still larger concessions had they been so minded. Though the queen would not admit it, and talked vaguely of

a third party composed only of her servants, they had her absolutely in their hands. They unquestionably possessed the means of overthrowing Godolphin, and of compelling her to choose between a purely Whig or a purely Tory Government; and either alternative was equally objectionable to her, as in 1706 she was no less exasperated at the insolence of Buckingham than shocked at the infidelity and republicanism of Wharton. The queen was in a position in which some compromise was essential for the sake of her policy, or in which her whole policy had to be sacrificed for the sake of indulging in a vindictive humour. One thing at all events was certain to everybody but herself. She could not stand alone. She exclaimed loudly against the despotism of the Whigs, but she could not shake off this despotism without subjecting herself to that of the Tories. The independence left to her was small; it was merely the choice of masters. Few people in the position of the queen would have hesitated for a moment as to the right course to pursue, but the queen doubted and wavered, and just displayed sufficient opposition to her ministers to render her necessary concession graceless.

Through the whole of this crisis Godolphin behaved with dignity, with wisdom, and with generosity. He advised the queen to pursue the only course which under the circumstances was possible. He struggled against her scruples, and incurred her displeasure, yet he never for a moment divulged to

the Whigs the true source from which antagonism to their wishes emanated. He loyally bore the odium which should have attached to his mistress, and we believe that to this day his honest attempt to shield her has had the effect of weighting his character with that charge of insincerity so loudly proclaimed against him by the Whigs.

## CHAPTER IX.

### SPAIN AND SAVOY.

We must now turn to events on the continent. How the English Government, in execution of Methuen's treaty of 1703, sent an expedition to Portugal in conjunction with the Dutch to expel the French from Spain, and to establish the Archduke Charles of Austria on the Spanish throne; how first under the Duke of Schomberg and then under the Earl of Galway its fate was attended with various fortune till at length the allied army was absolutely overthrown in 1707 at Almanza; how Peterborough took Barcelona in 1705, and retired in disgust from the country two years afterwards, are all circumstances which are well known to history, and which we can only allude to briefly here. We regret that the reference must be brief, for there is every temptation to linger on the path of our narrative, but we feel that it would be unjustifiable to make it long. Methuen's correspondence with Godolphin, to which we have already alluded on a previous page, is deeply interesting. A fair and accurate knowledge of many of the foremost men of the period, of Schomberg, of Galway, of Peterborough, of the Archduke Charles,

of the Austrian favourites, but over and above all, of Methuen himself, may be gathered from its perusal. Much there is in it, moreover, which is new or fresh, and which later associations and glorious military achievements, greatly increasing the renown of the British people, render doubly attractive. Spain, indeed, must ever have an almost romantic interest for Englishmen, and if we refrain now from enlarging on so alluring a topic, it is because the history of the Spanish war has no legitimate place in the life of Lord Godolphin. Yet though it is impossible to pursue so pleasing a subject at any length, we cannot entirely dismiss it from these pages without a few words of notice. The war was undertaken on the responsibility of Godolphin and his colleagues; but more especially of Godolphin, as Marlborough never displayed any particular partiality for operations which, while they affected a diversion of the French forces, had an undoubted tendency to starve his own army. It is therefore very important, especially if the policy of an armed intervention in Spain can in any way be fixed upon Godolphin, to make some inquiry in regard to the wisdom of the project, Was the scheme a well-devised and a practical one, or was it foredoomed by circumstances to failure? However bright the promise of success, should not experience have taught the Lord Treasurer to beware of the jealousy of the Dutch, of the torpidity of the Austrians, of the instability of his Portuguese allies, of the notorious uncertainties attending councils of war composed of representatives

of many jarring nationalities? Possibly it ought, and we have no desire to relieve Godolphin of a shred of the responsibility which should attach to every minister for the acts of his agents; but it seems to us, judging merely from Methuen's correspondence with him, that he had a clearer conception of the possibilities of the enterprise, a juster appreciation of the characters of those with whom he had to deal, and a more intuitive sense of the proper methods and seasons of action than had either his generals or his ambassador. A few words, therefore, as to the policy of a war which tarnished the military reputation of Great Britain and led to bitter controversies in Parliament, will be in their proper place in a narrative of the life of one of its principal advocates.

It seems then to us that apart from the special circumstances of the time which shall be immediately touched upon, the policy of Godolphin in maintaining a great war in Spain, and in attempting to kindle an insurrection in Provence, was sound and statesmanlike. Spain was then, and will probably always continue to be in times of warfare, a source of danger to France. France is not prepared for dangerous invasions from the direction of Spain. Spain is relatively weak, absolutely isolated, and rarely offensive. It is from the east, not from the south, that France apprehends danger; therefore, like some great tree which has thrown out its roots to secure itself from the prevailing and tem-

pestuous storms which are directed incessantly from one quarter of the heaven and leaves its other side in weakness, so the whole offensive and defensive machinery of France has been constructed for operations on the German rather than on the Spanish frontier. Spain, indeed, may be called the back-door into the French premises, and, like other back-doors, it is often feebly guarded, when the front door is secured by bolt and bar. For these reasons, when a European conflagration breaks out, and a maritime power like Great Britain in conflict with France undertakes military operations on the Continent, Spain is almost sure to be selected as the most suitable basis of attack.

The truth of this assertion and the justification of Godolphin's policy is to be found in the issue of later events. There is an extraordinary analogy between the position of France in the beginning of the eighteenth century and in the beginning of the nineteenth century. There is hardly an argument which could be employed to justify the plan of war under Wellington which could not be more forcibly employed to justify the plan of war under Galway. It is scarcely possible for an historical parallel to be more complete. France at both epochs was environed by continental enemies whom she was resisting in the eighteenth century successfully, and defeating in the nineteenth century triumphantly. At the earlier period Spain was under the titular sovereignty of the grandson of the French king, at the later period of

the brother of the French emperor. In both cases Portugal was allied to England, and the Spaniards were in a state of disorder favourable to the British intruder. Change a few names and a few dates, and it would be difficult to say which was one period and which was the other; yet identical as were the circumstances, the same policy which led to the annihilation of the British army in 1707 led in the first fourteen years of the nineteenth century to the most signal success which has ever crowned the arms of any country at any time. The policy of the war as a political conception was as good at one time as at the other. The discrepancy in results must be sought for in something almost outside the control of statesmen, the power of a great man to stamp his character on the times, and to influence and direct by his genius what too frequently appears to be the pre-ordained destinies of the human race. Had Galway been a Wellington, and Wellington a Galway, in what different characters might the history of Europe have been written! We contend that but for the absence of an instrument—an instrument which it is true may not be forged once in a hundred years,[1] and upon which, therefore, it may perhaps be said that no statesman should count—there was no reason why Godolphin's policy in the eighteenth century should not have proved as successful and as

[1] 'Never indeed,' says Grote, 'had two such generals as the Duke of Wellington and the Emperor Napoleon encountered since the day when Scipio and Hannibal met at Zama.'

glorious as that of the British Government in the nineteenth century.

While the selection of Spain as the theatre of war was thus undoubtedly expedient upon general grounds, there were other reasons for the choice.

From the north to the south Europe was in arms against France. Great Britain, Holland, Prussia, Austria, Savoy, and Portugal, were either formed, or about to be formed, into a huge confederacy which, in spite of the not unnatural forebodings of statesmen, it certainly appeared almost impossible for any single nation, however powerful, to resist. The confederates seemed to have all in their favour. They not only disputed the mastery by land, but they held absolute dominion by sea. Spain herself, who had resented the intervention of Europe in her affairs, and whose wounded sense of national dignity had induced her at first to lean towards France, began almost immediately after the outbreak of hostilities to incline to the allies.

Under the circumstances the moment for kindling a war in the Peninsula was most propitious. Nothing was wanting but the presence in Spain of the prince for whose sake it was to be fought, and a leader of ability to render it successful. But for long neither prince nor leader was forthcoming. Had the Archduke Charles evinced the slightest activity in his own cause, he might have carried all before him, and seated himself by one happy campaign on the throne of Spain. The Spaniards were prepared to receive him, the French were unprepared

to resist him. According to Methuen, the Spanish grandees had shut themselves up in their houses, added to the number of their retainers, and only awaited the arrival of the Austrian prince to put the government of the country into his hands.[1] According to Tessé, the French fever was past, and the Spaniards were ready to expose themselves to a general revolution rather than be governed from France. 'I do not know any one at Madrid,' he asserts, 'who would not kiss the hand of the Archduke Charles.' And while this was the attitude of Spain towards the allies, the condition of the French in Spain was lamentable. 'Everything,' says Tessé, speaking of the combined Spanish and French affairs, 'passed without order, without precaution, without decision, without money, without in a word anything which is the support of States.'[2]

Such is the verdict of one of the first French generals of the age. In it, we think, will be found the best defence for Godolphin's policy. We are left indeed to marvel that the war was not successful; to ask why Spain was not conquered, why Philip was not precipitated from his throne, why this brilliant opportunity of victory was lost. The fault was not Godolphin's, unless it was a fault not to know how dead, how apathetic, and how dull the mind of an Austrian prince could be.

[1] John Methuen to Godolphin, April 22, 1704. Additional MSS. 28056, f. 52, British Museum.

[2] Coxe's *Memoirs of the Kings of Spain.* Tessé to Lewis XIV., April 24, 1705.

The Archduke Charles, surrounded by a band of proud and greedy German courtiers, was a grievous load, which those who were striving for him had to bear through the war. He who should have animated the cause proved one of its gravest embarrassments. His presence harassed the generals in the field, while his absence from Portugal at the commencement of the war filled Methuen with alarm and perplexity. The circumstances would have indeed been prodigious which could have induced the dignified and stolid Austrian to swerve by one hair's breadth from the course which he wished to pursue. While Methuen was despatching letter after letter to Godolphin, begging that the archduke should repair at once to Lisbon, while the Portuguese ministers in his absence were actually debating whether Portugal should not secede from the alliance, Charles was converting his voyage to Lisbon into a holiday trip, and was engaged in England in exchanging compliments at court, and making handsome presents to English courtiers. And so it always was, not only with the war in Spain, but with all wars at that time; thousands of lives, millions of treasure were lavished upon the cause of princes, who on their side refused to put themselves to the smallest inconvenience, and who placed the most trivial punctilio above the highest exigencies of state.

Thus the policy of the war in Spain was, we think, sufficiently good and sound; it remains to be asked how far Godolphin was to be blamed for the

selection of leaders whom experience proved to be totally inefficient to conduct it, and whether in his intercourse with his Portuguese allies and his own generals, he acted with tact and firmness, and in such a manner as to contribute as much as possible to the success of the expedition.

It would be very difficult and perhaps rather disingenuous to attempt altogether to acquit Godolphin from the charge of having selected very unfitting men to lead the great and perilous enterprise which he had undertaken. Schomberg was no general at all, and Galway, as events proved, was a very inferior one, besides possessing the fatal fault, for a person in his situation, of inability to act in harmony with others. The appointment of the Duke of Schomberg to the chief command in Spain had unquestionably a prejudicial influence upon the progress of the war at its very commencement, and must therefore be regarded as a blunder on the part of the Government of which Godolphin was the head. It is difficult to explain why Schomberg was preferred to this high and unsuitable post except that he was a man of high rank, and as the son of one who was esteemed in his day the greatest living master of the art of war, it may perhaps have been supposed that he inherited his father's military talents. He had already been marked out for active employment in the field, and had been selected as general of the contemplated expedition against Dieppe in 1703[1]; the expedition, however,

[1] Additional MSS. 29589, f. 28, British Museum.

as has elsewhere been said, never sailed, and as far as we know Schomberg had seen no service to entitle him to any military command whatever. Schomberg's temper and political attributes were on a par with his military abilities. He had hardly set foot in Portugal before he quarrelled with the king, and indeed with every one with whom he came into contact. His military incapacity became rapidly the theme of universal derision. Methuen treated him like a child, lectured him and made him promise to take no step without his approbation. The King of Portugal absolutely detested him, and inveighed 'bitterly against his pride and obstinacy, lightness, irresolution, disobedience and incapacity.' His solders, it was said, destroyed the country and oppressed the peasants. The good name which the English of previous expeditions had left behind them was forfeited, and English honour was tarnished. By Spaniards, by Portuguese, by the kings, by the nobles, and by the soldiers Schomberg was equally hated. 'Should he act like an angel for the future,' wrote Paul Methuen to his father, 'he can never retrieve the reputation he has lost.' [1]

Lord Galway was a man of very different type from the Duke of Schomberg; yet his appointment to the chief command in Spain in succession to Schomberg was not a happy one. Galway's charac-

[1] See letters from John and Paul Methuen, April and June, 1704. Additional MSS. 28056, ff. 52, 84, and 106, British Museum. See also *Memoirs of the Duke of Berwick.*

ter, except that he was a man of undoubted courage, might be best described in negatives, and negative qualities were valueless for the objects which he was called upon to achieve. What was wanted in Spain was a man of genius, one who was a leader not in name alone, but whose nature fitted him for the command of men, and would secure for him almost unconsciously the support of those with whom he mixed. Peterborough, with all his recklessness and daring, might in spite of his many faults have accomplished a triumph. But neither physically nor mentally was Galway equal to the post which was allotted to him. His health at an early period suffered from the severity of his campaigns, and he had scarcely landed in Portugal before an attack of gout endangered his life. Perhaps his infirmities affected his temper, for as time went on he acquired among the Spaniards the reputation of being passionate and headstrong. His letters display a mind deficient in firmness and somewhat lacking in apprehensive power. He floated hither and thither upon the sea of Portuguese intrigue, utterly unable either to stem or to avoid the currents and undercurrents which swept around him. Every act of his career indicated indecision. When at Lisbon he was momentarily infected with the courage of Methuen, when in camp his resolutions evaporated at the first hostile murmur of a council of war. The prey of vacillation, his mind was torn between obedience to the exhortations of the English ambassador and

feeble acquiescence in the plausible but illusory promises of the Portuguese ministers. Such was the man who was most unfortunately chosen to control the conduct of a war complicated by almost every circumstance of military and political difficulty. The blame of Galway's selection as general must of course be borne by the English Government. In making the appointment Marlborough, it has been said, had the largest share. Galway, however, in his letters declares that he owed his Spanish command to Godolphin.[1]

In his directions to his generals Godolphin showed that he was not deficient in spirit. He was anxious at all costs to take advantage of the weakness of the French position in the Peninsula. In 1705 he had strongly recommended that the campaign should be an offensive one. He wished to pour his forces into the fertile province of Andalusia, to lay waste the richest region of Spain, and to direct his victorious arms against the ancient and opulent city of Seville. These operations he calculated should commence in March. It was April 20 before the army was actually in the field, 'a hundred things wanting and amiss.' For the year the opportunity of crushing the French by one final and brilliant assault was lost ; but Godolphin looked forward with hope over the winter, and when the spring of 1706 approached he tendered again the same advice. In the month of March he wrote to Galway pressing him to invade Spain at

[1] Additional MSS. 28056 and 28057, British Museum.

once, and to do so with ten thousand men rather than lose time by waiting for reinforcements from the provinces.[1] His advice was excellent, and the reasons for following it were strong. Every feature of the situation was an argument in favour of instant and decisive action. The French in Spain were in a state of confusion far surpassing even that of the allies. The bulk of their forces was besieging Barcelona, which had been so lately and so gloriously captured by Peterborough ; such troops as were left to watch the Portuguese frontier had no general, or worse still, were so subdivided in various commands as to render them practically useless ; Spain herself, torn by internal discord, seemed to invite the approach of the invader, contentions were raging at Madrid, discontent was spreading among the people. Had Godolphin's bold but prudent advice been adopted, and the English and Portuguese army marched in the early spring upon Madrid, the consequences might indeed have been disastrous to the French cause. But advice and admonitions were alike thrown away upon one of the most torpid and straitlaced of that class of military formalists who have, to the misfortune of England, so often led her armies. That Galway should ever have been censured by Parliament for the '*offensiveness*' of his operations seems like a malicious satire, and a grim parliamentary joke upon the feebleness of his generalship.

Godolphin even began to suspect that the Portu-

[1] Additional MSS. 28056 and 28057, British Museum.

guese were making a dupe of Galway for their own purposes, and, if this indeed were so, he saw clearly how lucrative was the deception which they were practising on the English. The war was immensely enriching Portugal; the trade which had once flowed into Spanish ports was now forced from its natural channels by the maritime supremacy of England and Holland, and poured its wealth into the Tagus. England was hazarding much for Portugal, while Portugal, it appeared, refused to encounter any risks in return. Godolphin determined to bring matters to a crisis; and he directed Methuen to inform the King of Portugal that his generals must advance upon Madrid, or that the English troops should be withdrawn from Portugal and the people abandoned to the resentment of France. This spirited resolution produced a series of meetings between Methuen and the king. The ambassador taxed the Portuguese ministers with the insincerity of which Godolphin accused them. The king assumed an attitude of the most unutterable astonishment. He could not believe his ears. He held up his hands, stamped upon the ground, appealed in frenzy to those about him. The play Methuen declared was performed to perfection; never, he said, did he indulge his mirth at a finer comedian.[1] But professions and repudiations fell flat in the face of the Lord Treasurer's rebuke. Methuen's representations admitted of no compromise,

[1] John Methuen to Lord Galway, May 28, 1706. Additional MSS. 28057, f. 196, British Museum.

and at length, intimidated by threats and encouraged by the news of the relief of Barcelona, the king gave tardy orders to advance. It had perhaps been better if the orders had never been given, if the advance had never been made, and if the English troops had indeed been recalled to England. Madrid was, it is true, taken ; but the results of the campaign were disastrous. The fault was not that of the English Government. The task which it had imposed upon its general was not a difficult one. The Duke of Berwick, than whom there is no better judge, remarks that if the allies had but properly followed up their successes Charles would have been established on the throne of Spain without a hope for Philip. The conception of the campaign was as admirable as its execution was miserable.

But success was impossible for an army in which every sort of irregularity was rampant ; from the councils of the generals to the pettiest details of regimental administration everything was in confusion, everything in disorder. So slight was the concert between the generals that there were sometimes as many plans for the conduct of a campaign as there were generals to frame them. In 1705 Galway desired to attack Badajos, Galveas to besiege Valenzia, the Admiral of Castile to march on Leon, while Fagel was engaged in thwarting any scheme which he thought would be acceptable to the English general. 'There are parties and factions in the camp,' laments Methuen in tones of the deepest despondency, 'who

hinder everything;'[1] and everything was hindered, and practically everything was stopped. Probably the most graphic accounts of the miserable condition of the allied armies in Spain are to be found in the letters of Paul Methuen to his father. Paul Methuen had in 1704 been attached to the headquarters of the allied army in the field. The frowardness, the ignorance of 'our leaders,' the sloth, the misconduct of 'our generals,' form a staple and important topic of this most interesting correspondence. Never was narrative more gloomy; never, we believe we may safely say, was one more disgraceful to those whom it concerned. Every sentiment of patriotism seemed lost in the unworthy desire to satisfy some petty grudge, or to inflict some jealous injury. What was proposed by one faction was as a matter of course opposed by the other. If some of the generals wished to advance in spite of the season of the year the remainder were certain to insist upon retiring into winter quarters. It was the fate of the army, Methuen observed, never to execute in the morning what was proposed the night before. Its movements were often purposeless and always slow; and it was greatly hampered by the presence of two kings whose luggage could never be got out of camp before nine o'clock in the morning. The condition of the troops was pitiable. They suffered from heat, from hunger, from thirst, and from storms. There was often no

[1] John Methuen to Godolphin, June 2, 1705. Additional MSS. 28056, f. 273, British Museum.

bread for the men, no straw nor forage for the horses, no water for man or beast; on one occasion the infantry could only quench their thirst by digging holes in the ground for the water to collect in.[1] Such was the army, and such were the leaders whom Godolphin vainly hoped would place the Archduke Charles on the throne of Spain, and perform those prodigies of valour and generalship which were displayed by another British army and another British leader a hundred years later in the Peninsula.

Godolphin's ambitious designs for the expulsion of the French from Spain failed partly perhaps because he attempted too much, and partly because he was badly supported by those who were working under him. There was not one of his agents in whom Godolphin placed more faith than in John Methuen; but even Methuen, zealous and devoted as he was, was not always to be trusted. His mind was so sanguine, he was so inclined to be influenced by present impressions, that his judgment was apt to be hasty and partial, and in consequence his opinion formed from experience at Lisbon was sometimes less reliable than the opinion of Godolphin formed from observation in London. The following short narrative will prove this assertion.

Of all the Spanish adherents to the cause of the allies, there was none more important than the Admiral of Castile. The Admiral of Castile had been

[1] Letters from Paul Methuen to his father in the autumn of 1704. Additional MSS. 28056, British Museum.

minister in Spain, and the rival of the Spanish favourite Portocarrero; he had adopted the cause of the Archduke Charles; had been marked out for ruin, and had dexterously escaped into Portugal before his enemies had time to entrap him into a French prison. With this powerful personage Methuen naturally desired to form an intimate connection, but the times were not altogether propitious for his purpose. There were divisions in those days in the English Cabinet, and the Admiral of Castile was not ignorant of the circumstance. There was not only the interest of Godolphin but the interest of Nottingham to be considered, and the Admiral of Castile had been warned that the interest of Nottingham was the one which was paramount. He acted in a manner which while indefensible on grounds of morality had, at all events, the sanction of the vicious diplomatic usage of the time. He regarded Methuen as the agent of Godolphin, to be made use of, but not to be trusted; he therefore accepted his proffered friendship, and simulated a confidence in him which he neither felt nor reciprocated.

Godolphin seems to have been well acquainted with the mazes of Portuguese intrigue. He at all events was not deceived by the admiral's professions of friendship either for himself or for Methuen, and he wrote to Methuen to place him on his guard. But Methuen's confidence in the Admiral of Castile was not to be shaken, and he firmly refused to believe

that a man who showed him every mark of esteem, who paid him constant visits in his house in the country, and who strolled and conversed with him in his garden, could be anything but a friend. It is a severe commentary on Methuen's credulity that there is still preserved among the Nottingham manuscripts a letter from the Admiral of Castile violently inveighing against the manner in which the English ambassador conducted his business at Lisbon.

Nor was Methuen always a safe guide as to the probabilities and possibilities of the war. In 1704 Godolphin must have received his letters with surprise and confusion. Methuen's opinion of the chances of the war varied almost with every month in the year. In January he was convinced that everything would go on well; in April he feared that the army might be destroyed and that the enterprise might miscarry; in May that it might be cut off; in June he announced that it had a good game before it. He was in despair about Schomberg, from whom he had no communications; and was satisfied that if Galway would only come to Lisbon he might achieve glorious successes.[1] When Galway did take over the command of the army, Methuen shortly appeared almost as much dissatisfied with Galway as he had been with Schomberg.

We mention these somewhat small details merely for the purpose of explaining the precise situation in which Godolphin was placed in regard to his ambassador in Spain. We do not wish to convey one syl-

[1] Additional MSS. 28056, British Museum.

lable of reproach against Methuen. Methuen's task was a most difficult one, and it was most patriotically and ably performed. He was surrounded by astute and unprincipled schemers each aiming at his own interest, and very regardless of the interests of the public ; the King of Portugal, who at first befriended him, fell at an early period dangerously ill, and the violent factions into which the Portuguese Court became divided added greatly to the embarrassments of his position ; the English generals whose duty it was to co-operate with him were perfectly unfit to act the part of leaders in such momentous times, and increased rather than diminished his anxiety ; and over and above all this, Methuen's health was broken, and he could no longer face as a strong man the exigencies of his lot ; he was attacked in body by gout and fever ; in mind by the foreboding that his conduct had arrayed enemies against him at home. As he gradually felt his health declining, it became the great object of his life to procure Godolphin's patronage for his son Paul, and to obtain for him apparently the appointment of envoy at Lisbon. Towards the end of his career he withdrew more and more to a favourite country residence near Lisbon, where, as he himself tells us, he drank asses' milk morning and evening. Here he died in 1706. We have said these few words of Methuen as we shall not have reason to mention him again. Of the many Englishmen who were employed in Spain during the early part of the war of the Spanish succession, there were few

who distinguished themselves; but among the first and foremost of these we should rank John Methuen.

So much for Spain. We shall now attempt to trace with equal brevity Godolphin's policy with respect to the war in Italy and the south of France. This may be summed up as a determination to take advantage in every way possible of the insurrection in the Cevennes. It is unusual, we admit, to ascribe the policy of a Government to any one minister in it, even though that minister may happen to be prime minister; but we think that those who have studied carefully the history of the reign of Queen Anne can entertain no doubt that it was Godolphin who principally promoted the war in Savoy, that Marlborough considered and sanctioned it, but that it was planned by Godolphin, and almost entirely supported by his energy and efforts. Hill's letters to Godolphin from Turin strongly confirm this opinion. Hill, as we know, was in a special way the chosen ambassador of Godolphin in Savoy, and it was Hill who, as Marlborough himself tells us, was the first to propose an attack upon Toulon.[1] Thus, we think that whatever credit or discredit may attach to the military policy of Great Britain in her designs on the south-east of France from 1703 to the siege of Toulon in 1707 should be attributed to Godolphin. The policy itself is too clear and simple to require explanation or argument. To attack France in a spot where the

[1] Cobbett's *Parliamentary History*, vol. vi. pp. 967, 976.

people were notoriously disloyal, to invade her with an army which would co-operate with a fleet, to destroy a most important French arsenal, to convert a local insurrection into a general rebellion, is a project which must appeal to the imagination and judgment of all, and render unnecessary any vindication from the pen of an apologist.

Much, however, must be left to conjecture as to the precise manner in which Godolphin intended to execute operations so daring and plausible. The historical details of his policy for carrying on the war on the side of Savoy are neither full nor accurate ; nor is this strange, as the Lord Treasurer's designs on this occasion never ripened into accomplished facts. History records events, and often does not pause to inquire how these events are produced, or whether they are due to premeditation or chance ; and after all, if history is to be regarded merely as a huge inventory of facts and circumstances, a sort of statistical table, as it were, from which the philosophical student can from experience of the past deduce theories for the future, as an arithmetician may employ the multiplication table to solve arithmetical problems, nothing more is necessary. But in the history, not of the times, but of a man, historical events may be a very misleading index to character ; for here we have to do with the objects and intentions of statesmen, and not with the random effects of their policy. Thus the historical recital of the military proceedings actually taken in Italy with the know-

ledge and sanction of Godolphin gives but the faintest indication of the express objects which he desired to achieve. Something, it is true, came of his designs, but it was not that which he intended, and we are here anxious to discover his intentions as an indication of his judgment and of his courage. His intentions are historically perhaps valueless, as nothing came of them, but a knowledge of them is all-important in forming any trustworthy opinion of the workings of his mind.

In the spring of 1705 Lord Peterborough sailed from St. Helens at the head of an expedition bound for the Mediterranean. His orders were to do what he could to help the Duke of Savoy, but much was left to his discretion, and as circumstances afterwards proved, he came to stretch his discretion almost to the extent of disobedience. Through the whole of September Peterborough was expected at Nice. Every preparation had been made to receive him, and the Camisard leader, Cavalier, who had been residing with Hill at Turin concocting schemes for the invasion of France, had been despatched over the Alps with his pockets full of money to inspire new hopes and courage into the minds of the Camisards.[1]

But the people of Nice waited for Peterborough in vain; for during the whole of September and part of October he was engaged, in spite of his orders and in spite of the reiterated directions of

[1] Hill to Godolphin, September 1705. Additional MSS. 28056, f. 367, British Museum.

Godolphin, in conducting a siege which appeared hopeless to every one, and the successful termination of which is to this day considered one of the marvels of military history. It is certain that when Peterborough left England, the English Government had no more idea that their general would attack Barcelona, than that he would attack Seringapatam. Such operations were no part of their military policy, and thus one of the most brilliant achievements of British arms during Godolphin's administration reflects no lustre upon him as minister, but was in fact highly detrimental to the plan which he had formed for carrying on hostilities. Provence, Languedoc, and Savoy, not Catalonia, had been destined by Godolphin to become the theatre of war. Nice, considered at that time one of the strongest fortresses in Europe, had been selected as the base of British operations in the coming campaign.[1] Here, protected from attack on the north by the stupendous and tumultuary mountains of the Maritime Alps, it was proposed to disembark the expedition. The position of Peterborough's force would, it is true, not have been altogether satisfactory, for it would have been between France on the one hand, and the French army occupying Savoy on the other; but the neighbouring province of Provence was honeycombed with rebellion, and the French army in Savoy so sated with conquest and weighted with

[1] Nice was then one of the strongest places in Europe. Every Duke of Savoy had added to the fortifications. In October 1705 the Duke of Berwick received orders to take it, which he did.

booty that it could hardly with safety to itself leave the prey which it was clutching. The summer of 1705 had seen the north of Italy overrun with French troops. They had been resisted with the utmost gallantry, but already Vendôme had in his prisons almost as many of the Duke of Savoy's soldiers as the duke himself had in his fortresses.[1] Had Peterborough landed at Nice, whatever his own risks might have been, the position of the French would have been most critical. A victory indeed would have released them from the English, but no such victory could be won unless they withdrew their forces from Turin, and exposed Lombardy to the attacks of Prince Eugene ; on the other hand a defeat would prove fatal. The English, with all the prestige of success, would immediately have advanced into Languedoc, where the population was disaffected and the soldiers few.

Such we believe in outline to have been the nature of the war which Godolphin in 1705 desired to kindle in the south of France. That this eminently wise design was not put into execution, was entirely attributable to the incredible stupidity, selfishness, and incapacity of the Archduke Charles and his German advisers. They had set their hearts upon Barcelona, and Barcelona they intended, if possible, to capture, cost the Queen of England what it might. Statesmen, soldiers, and diplomatist opposed them in vain ; Peterborough

[1] Hill to Godolphin, March 4, $\frac{1704}{1705}$. Additional MSS., British Museum.

weakly yielded to the mis-timed sentiment of a mock king and the passionate reproaches of an unworthy counsellor, and wasted before a Spanish city the forces which it was intended, and which he himself desired, to utilise in Savoy.

Godolphin had every reason to complain of Peterborough's conduct. The capture of Barcelona indeed was accomplished. Its capitulation was a most brilliant climax to operations carried on without unanimity, without any regard to the laws of war, and against the judgment of the most responsible persons engaged in the siege. But the fall of this great city, however ready Godolphin was to make use of the success, was not what he sought. Nor could Peterborough plead ignorance of Godolphin's wishes. Twice at least during September the Lord Treasurer reminded him that Savoy, not Catalonia, was the proper theatre for his operations.[1] Peterborough knew that Godolphin's opinion was not merely that of an elderly gentleman sitting in his arm-chair at home, hatching impossible projects in such moments of leisure as he could steal from horse-racing or his office ; on the contrary, he knew that Godolphin's opinion was shared by Paul Methuen, who accompanied the army, and whose excellent judgment was fortified by long experience. He knew that it was the opinion of the general officers of the army, and he admitted that it was his own opinion as well. 'We had made,' he writes

[1] Letter in the form of a diary from Paul to John Methuen, September 13, 1705. Additional MSS. 28056, British Museum.

to Godolphin on October 12, 'a better beginning elsewhere, and as good a conclusion here.' Lastly, he knew the Duke of Savoy was in extremities, for the duke had informed him that if he did not land his troops at once at Nice the war in Italy would be over. Yet because the Archduke Charles and his favourite Lichtenstein were stubbornly bent upon a plan of proceeding which everybody condemned, he deliberately set aside his own opinion, the opinions of the best military judges, and the spirit of his orders, rather than assume an authority which it was his duty to exercise. In Peterborough's subsequent disappointments it is impossible to pity him. He had voluntarily chosen his own part, and he was bound to accept with resignation all the evils which it entailed upon him, whether these were brought about by his own mismanagement, or by the errors of others. We can easily conceive that as the war went on Godolphin read with displeasure and irritation Peterborough's perpetual outpourings against the Archduke Charles and Lichtenstein. If Charles was no better than a German blockhead, who if he ever mounted the throne would have hated an Englishman as much as a Frenchman; if Lichtenstein was a monster in human shape; if his falsehoods, his pride, his rapacity, his meddling, and his ignorance were likely to produce a terrible catastrophe; if, weak and variable as the winds of heaven, he was one day puffed up with pride and another day sunk in abject despondency,[1]

[1] Peterborough to Godolphin, October 12 and December 30, 1705. Additional MSS. 28056, British Museum.

how was it that Peterborough had submitted to be governed by such a monarch and by such a minister!

It is, however, unnecessary for us to condemn Peterborough, as Peterborough stands self-condemned before the bar of history. No censure could be severer than that which he unconsciously passes upon himself in his own letters to Godolphin, for in them he establishes his sole responsibility for the difficulties which he complained were too heavy for him to bear. Having the power to choose, having a hopeful enterprise on the one hand and an apparently hopeless one on the other, having on this side good advisers and on that bad, he with his eyes wide open selected to achieve the impossible, and to act with the ignorant and foolish. The complaints which he poured upon Godolphin like water, and which like rain fell upon the just and upon the unjust, must have inspired Godolphin with a feeling as nearly allied to contempt as it was possible to feel for a man who was undoubtedly in many ways one of brilliant genius and boundless energy. The difficulties which Peterborough found insuperable, and which were rendered by his own behaviour even more insuperable than he found them, were precisely the very difficulties which it was one of the first offices of a general to overcome. The great obstacle to a successful campaign in Spain was not of a military or a strategical character. It was the difficulty of conquering national prejudices, of composing petty jealousies, and of blending antagonistic interests into an active and harmonious combination.

Tact, temper, and judgment were qualities quite as necessary for success in Spain as they were on the Danube or the Rhine, and as every page of Peterborough's letters proves that he had none of them, he stands almost as much self-condemned as if he were constantly describing defeats which had been inflicted on him, because forsooth the enemy had taken up too strong a position, or had attacked his line precisely where he was least able to resist. Half Marlborough's successes are due to his temper and tact, all Peterborough's failures are due to the want of them. He had only half the qualities of a good general and no more, and the half which he lacked was the half perhaps most wanted in Spain.

But Godolphin in attempting to carry out his designs in Savoy had to face other difficulties besides the waywardness of a headstrong general. Had Peterborough executed his orders to the letter, Godolphin would still have had to contend with the embarrassments created by his vexatious and half-hearted allies. Without the co-operation of the Dutch and the Imperialists little could be done, and the Dutch and the Austrians were so wrapt in self-interest and so overweighted with caution that the assistance they gave practically amounted to nothing. While the Duke of Savoy was venturing person, crown, and country for the cause of the allies, the Dutch and the Austrians gave him nothing in return. It was in vain that he begged the Dutch to pay him the subsidy stipulated by treaty ; it was in vain that his

minister demanded it at the Hague in a manner so peremptory that in the language of Hill it was enough 'to fright a body.' The Dutch, ever clinging to formalities, refused to grant him even a fraction of the money till the treaty had been formally signed. If the Dutch treated the duke badly, the Imperialists treated him worse. They were inspired by no sentiment of generous gratitude, and offered only their impotent friendship in exchange for the solid advantages of the Savoyard connection. 'The emperor,' writes Hill, 'does not so much as find bread for his own troops, they are left to the care of his Royal Highness and the parish.' 'Wax and parchment' was the poor and worthless return for solid services. 'We have cried out,' Hill continues, 'we have petitioned at Vienna, and we have threatened, we have solicited my Lord Duke and Prince Eugene, and not neglected Prince Louis, but we are never the better.' Hill was more than despondent, he was hopeless. From Italy, from the Germans in Italy, or even, we think, from an English expedition, he expected nothing. There was only one chance of safety, and that rested with Marlborough on the Danube. 'I hope he will save the lame, the blind, and the paralytic, I mean the Germans, we have faith enough in him to be saved all.' That things should go on as they were doing, Hill declared was impossible, as either the duke would lose his country or the allies the duke. The people and the nobility hated and abhorred the war, and Hill felt convinced

either that some attempt must be made to inspire the cause of the allies in Italy with fresh vigour, or that the Duke of Savoy would enter into a separate treaty with France.[1]

And while Hill regarded the listlessness of the Germans with despair, he placed no faith in the unsupported efforts of the Camisards. The insurrection had failed to produce any leader of high social distinction. In his eyes it was little better than a Jacquerie. It is true, he observed, that the oppressions in France are very great, that the necessities and misery of the people are equal to them, and that the complaints of both Protestants and Catholics are in proportion to what they feel, but all the great men are still loyal. He had offered them arms, but Rolande, with whom he had communicated, had replied that there was nothing they wanted so much as money with which to buy bread. In fact, observes Hill, 'it looks as if they wanted the queen's charities more than her subsidies.' He fully recognised the importance of the insurrection as affecting the interests of the allies, but it was as a disturbing element in the French kingdom that he valued it rather than as a dangerous rebellion which might be rendered still more dangerous by active and armed assistance from without. 'I pray you to excuse me, my lord,' he writes to Godolphin on August 5, in alluding to Godolphin's proposed invasion of Provence, 'if I yet see no-

[1] See letters from Hill, April, May, July, and September, 1704. Additional MSS. 28056, British Museum.

thing which can give us the least hopes of attempting the great and glorious exploit which I see you have still at heart;' and in the month following he writes, in a tone which can hardly be described as commendatory, 'I do not condemn, my lord, your great and good design, I hope you will keep it in your thoughts till next spring.'

But Godolphin, in spite of every obstacle, clung as closely as circumstances would permit to his warlike designs in favour of the Camisards. If Hill disagreed will him, he at all events admired the courage and pertinacity of his chief. 'You are an admirable ally,' Hill writes. 'I believe we shall do and suffer everything here rather than venture the loss of your friendship.' 'Never was there in history so good an ally as Her Majesty, or a worse one than the good old man at Vienna.' 'It is the sturdy duke and your lordship who keep the war alive, and you ought to have all the honour of it.'[1]

The Italian war in 1705 was the cause of one of those rare differences which occasionally took place between Godolphin and Marlborough, and which must ever at times occur between those who guard the public purse and whose business it is to provide money, and those who are responsible for the efficiency of the public service and whose vocation it is to spend it.

In the autumn of 1705 it was proposed to send a force of Imperialists from Germany to Savoy. This

[1] Additional MSS. 28056, British Museum.

resolution was undoubtedly taken on behalf of the allies generally, but it is equally undoubted that of all the members of the alliance Austria was the one which was most likely to be benefited by its adoption. Yet the emperor refused to send a man or a gun to Italy till he had first obtained a considerable subsidy from England and Holland; or, to use the proper conventional phraseology, till he had been 'promptly gratified' by a loan. To Marlborough such a request seemed natural, and he begged Godolphin to consent to it. Godolphin, however, raised objections. He did not respect the Imperialists; he regarded their sloth and want of method with disapprobation, and was indignant at the extortion which was displayed in ever-repeated demands upon the English exchequer; there was nothing which they did not ask for, nothing which was not left for England to pay. 'They demand and expect,' writes Peterborough to Godolphin concerning a somewhat similar application of the Archduke Charles and his German courtiers, 'that you will fortify and provide every place with ammunition and provisions, that you will buy the king's meat and clothes, in a word, supply every necessary and superfluous expense . . . for while they find a possibility of being furnished they expect and ask even for a pistol.'[1] As it was in Spain so it was elsewhere. What wonder if Godolphin groaned in spirit over the demands of his generals, and momentarily hesitated whether he

[1] June 23, 1706. Additional MSS. 28057, f. 247, British Museum.

should defray the lavish expenses of his proud and hungry allies.

Under the circumstances Godolphin was less compliant than usual; he wrote a letter to the German minister of so frank a nature, that it produced from him an angry retort. The Lord Treasurer of England, said Count Wratislaw, seemed to think that the rescue of the Duke of Savoy might be effected by invectives against the Court of Vienna.[1] The emperor, who was not at all too proud to beg, but loved a cheerful giver, and not one who gave as if he granted rather than received a favour, was indignant. Godolphin's letter to Count Wratislaw had been as a matter of course deposited in the official archives at Vienna. It was determined to prevent the record of any such letters for the future, and the emperor decreed that, henceforward, answers to similar applications should be verbal.[1] Marlborough, however, had his own way. Godolphin yielded with the worst possible grace; he said that after all which had been done for the House of Austria by the British Government during the last two years, he considered the request was unreasonable; but he decided not to oppose it, and he gave to the loan a tardy and unwilling assent.

The difference which we have described between Godolphin and Marlborough was not of a personal character. Its origin may be traced to the distinct duties which each had to perform rather than to any

[1] Coxe's *Marlborough*, vol. i. p. 344.

political difference of opinion between them. Godolphin and Marlborough regarded the loan from points of view peculiar to the situations which they occupied. Marlborough never for a moment lost sight of the war. The war to him was everything, domestic policy nothing, except in so far as it subordinated itself to the war and promoted it. But with Godolphin the case was different. Ardently as he supported the war, great as were the sacrifices which he was prepared to make for it, he was pre-eminently a financier. If it was his aim to make England great abroad, it was no less his aim to make her wealthy and prosperous at home. Through the turbulent period of his official career he contrived with wonderful sagacity so to manage the affairs of the country as to render England, plunged as she was in the vortex of a mighty struggle, as flourishing at home as she had sometimes been in moments of the profoundest peace. In spite of the enormous expenses of the war, the credit of the country steadily continued to rise. But nobody knew better than Godolphin that there must be limits to the exactions of foreign States, which if surpassed would render skill and thrift useless; that the opulence of the country could not withstand repeated inroads upon its resources, to be squandered on objects which, to say the least, could be productive of only the most remote advantages to Great Britain. We are not sure whether, looking back one hundred and eighty years, the judgment of posterity will not incline to agree with Godolphin rather than with

Marlborough, that it will not consider that there were objects which, however important, might be too dearly bought, and that there were considerations of more moment to England than enfeebling beyond a certain point the power of France, or establishing Charles on the throne of Spain, or the Germans in the Milanese. But a policy thrifty and cautious, however much it may appeal to the judgment of the few, lacks the brilliancy and display necessary to make it popular with unreflecting persons. Consequently Godolphin's prudence has been reproached as parsimony, and his efforts to protect the wealth of the people have been ascribed to narrowness of mind and a deficiency in statesmanship. We think the censure unjust. The war was important, and Godolphin acknowledged it to be so ; money in rivers was wanted, and money in rivers at Godolphin's bidding was forthcoming ; but he did not think that all the burthens of a war, which, after all, was not in the first place or even mainly for English objects, should fall upon England ; he did not agree in the opinion once expressed by Peterborough when applying for money for Spain, that it was indeed the duty of the Spaniards to find the money, but if it was not found by Spain, it must be found by England. The thought was one which might well inspire a general wrapt up in his plans for war, and such thoughts inspired Marlborough no less than Peterborough. But in a minister who had under his charge the happiness and well-being of a people, such a sentiment

would not only have been out of place, but it would have been criminal. Godolphin's caution has been disparagingly described 'as the cold calculations of finance.'[1] We think it was far more creditable to his character, and to his reputation as a statesman, than if he had consented to advance public money without criticism and without inquiry.

[1] Coxe's *Marlborough*, vol. i. p. 343.

## CHAPTER X.

### HARLEY AND GODOLPHIN—DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MARLBOROUGH AND GODOLPHIN.

Once more we resume the thread of domestic narrative which is now drawing to a close. Sunderland's appointment to the post of Secretary of State had the effect of disarming for the time the opposition with which the Whigs threatened the Government. The session of 1706, anticipated by Godolphin with such gloomy forebodings, proved to be one of the easiest which he had yet experienced. Everything went well, till almost the moment of its termination, when troubles were excited from a quarter whence naturally none were expected. Godolphin found himself involved in a controversy with one of the most dangerous and influential of his own colleagues. Hitherto his administration had been principally imperilled by the hostility of the Whigs, henceforth his most inveterate foe was his Tory Secretary of State, Robert Harley.

The session of Parliament had almost passed away, when some large London merchants prayed the House of Commons to consider their serious grievances. According to the Act of Union between England and

Scotland free trade was to be established between the countries after May 1, 1707 ; but until May 1 the customs duties in each kingdom were to remain unaltered. As in Scotland the customs duties were generally lower than in England, an opportunity was thus offered to dishonest speculators to perpetrate an outrageous abuse of the treaty. With the view of cheating the English Revenue, foreign merchants made consignments of goods to Scotland, intending to realise them after May in the English market. The transaction was clearly, in spirit at all events, fraudulent, and, in so far as England was concerned, mischievous. The English traders loudly complained that they would be ruined, and appealed to Parliament for redress. Their grievance enlisted the sympathy of the House of Commons, as it was sure to do, and Harley, acting upon his own responsibility and without the permission of Godolphin, introduced into Parliament a bill, which passed the Lower House, to restrain a practice in itself absolutely incapable of defence.

The procedure of Harley in respect to the complaints of the English traders had all the appearance of equity ; but, nevertheless, there were two sides to the question ; and there was another course which it might be more prudent to follow. It was possible to condemn the proceedings in Scotland as bad without absolutely declaring them illegal. To many it seemed that in this case policy was at war with justice. The Scotch, in the spring of 1707, were in a highly sensitive state. Many Scotchmen hated the Union,

and would have still seized any opportunity to frustrate it. It was absolutely certain that Harley's bill, if passed by Parliament, would be published through the length and breadth of the land as a glaring and insulting breach of the international compact. Thus the Union might yet be wrecked, and this great measure, on the very threshold of accomplishment, might again be subjected to renewed failure. Such was the view of the situation which presented itself to Godolphin, and which was supported by the House of Lords. The peers did not wish to throw out the bill, but they were determined not to pass it. A dispute occurred between the two Houses which a brief prorogation of a few days did nothing to assuage. Godolphin, who was in the country, hurried up to London to counteract the machinations of his subordinate. His power with the House of Commons was great. It was said of him that the words which he spoke in Parliament were listened to as if pronounced by an oracle,[1] and even now in the heat of party conflict his arguments and counsels produced considerable impression. But in spite of Godolphin's influence the House of Commons was not to be turned from the resolution which it had already adopted. Harley's bill was again passed, but its further progress was stifled by the efforts of ministers. Few things could have been more unfortunate for Godolphin than Harley's rebellion. It produced bad blood between the two Houses of Parliament, and it exhibited a fatal

[1] Cunningham's *History of Great Britain*, vol. ii. p. 85.

division in the ranks of the Government. To this bill is ascribed by some writers the enmity which was soon afterwards manifested between Godolphin and Harley. Godolphin was filled with vexation at an event so troublesome at the moment, so charged with evil to come. 'The close,' he observes to Marlborough, 'of the best session of Parliament that England ever saw, has been unhappily hindered by a broil between the two Houses.'[1] With a reserve almost inexplicable between two colleagues so closely allied as Marlborough and Godolphin, Godolphin refrained from mentioning to Marlborough the name of Harley; but it is certain that if he had never mistrusted the fidelity of Harley before, he must now at least have begun to suspect the falseness of his professed friendship.

The conduct of Harley caused Godolphin serious embarrassment; fresh complications were shortly to render his position still more unpleasant and insecure. In 1706–7 the Whigs had to a considerable extent been conciliated by Sunderland's admission to the Government, their confidence was for the time restored, and their support in Parliament secured. Now circumstances occurred which once more excited their suspicions, and led to a crisis which threatened the extinction of the Government.

In 1708 three important pieces of Church preferment—the Bishoprics of Chester and Exeter, and the chair of Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford—

[1] Coxe's *Marlborough*, vol. ii. p. 35.

fell vacant. To the unbounded resentment of the Whigs, the queen declared her intention of conferring all these important places on Tories. The Whigs, believing that the queen was acting upon the advice of her ministers, considered that the Government had deserted them. Their rage fell principally upon Godolphin ; but as a matter of fact Godolphin did not deserve the censure which they poured upon him. A conspiracy had sprung up at Court which left him minister only in name, and he had almost as little voice in the distribution of favours as the Whigs themselves.

We do not intend to enter here into any description of the Masham intrigue. The alienation of the queen from her ministers, the rise of Abigail Hill, the clandestine and mole-like action of Harley, the proceedings of the Whigs in Parliament, who, having, as they termed it, Godolphin's head in a cleft stick, raised discussions and motions which left him entirely at their mercy, the final coalition between the Whigs and Marlborough and Godolphin, and the re-establishment of the Government upon a Whig basis, are matters of general history and are well known. We are more concerned in reflecting on these proceedings than in recounting them, and in the first place we should like to consider how it was that Harley's treachery came upon Marlborough and Godolphin ostensibly as a surprise, and how it happened that Godolphin, so famous for his wisdom, so intimate with his colleagues, so pro-

foundly versed in the mazes of Court policy, could have overlooked a danger which sprang up at his very side, and which ultimately not only hurled him from office, but shattered the Whig party, produced a hurried and unsatisfactory peace, and to a certain extent endangered the Protestant succession. Perfidious and reprehensible as was the conduct of Harley, the blindness of ministers which never penetrated his most transparent arts is equally striking, and deserves at least some slight measure of notice.

Both Harley and St. John,[1] but especially Harley, have been held up to odium for their alleged treachery to Godolphin and Marlborough. That Harley, at all events, actually desired to deceive his colleagues is clear. Whether as a matter of fact he ever succeeded, or could have succeeded in doing so, is another matter. The point is an important one, not for the purpose of sifting the characters either of Harley or of Godolphin, but because if we can show that Godolphin silently penetrated the designs of Harley, it may indicate some hidden differences between Godolphin and Marlborough which induced the Lord Treasurer for the sake of harmony to acquiesce in the deception.

Circumstances in 1707 warrant the supposition that Marlborough and Godolphin were no longer agreed upon a common basis and method of government. Marlborough still clung with desperate

[1] St. John, afterwards Viscount Bolingbroke, was appointed Secretary at War in place of Blathwayte in 1704.

tenacity to the scheme of government which was to exclude the absolute sway either of Whig or Tory. To effect his end and to adjust the balance of power, it was indispensable that Tories as well as Whigs should be in the administration, and Harley and St. John, 'the particular friends' of Marlborough, as Godolphin called them, were established in the ministry as a counterpoise to Sunderland and Cowper. It would not be just to say that they absolutely represented Marlborough's political opinions, but they undoubtedly represented the plan by which he intended to rule. It was Marlborough who brought them into office, it was Marlborough who kept them in office, and it was Marlborough who with the assistance of the queen sheltered them from the resentment both of the Whigs and of Godolphin. When Harley plotted against the Whigs, it is difficult therefore to understand what there was in his conduct to surprise Marlborough ; if Marlborough was deceived at all, it was by his own system of government and by seeking to achieve his ends by relying on diametrically antagonistic forces.

The position and views of Godolphin were very different to those of Marlborough. Godolphin had long seen the fallacy of the scheme to which Marlborough still so closely adhered. He had abandoned it, and now every effort of his life was concentrated in reconciling the queen and Marlborough to the Whigs. The separation of the Government into groups must have greatly perplexed Godolphin, as

it was the outcome of the plan which he had discarded and against which he now struggled. Yet we are asked to believe that he was ignorant that the leader of the group which incessantly opposed him, which would have made him break with the Whigs, whom he desired to join, was his enemy. The situation of Godolphin was an extremely difficult one. He disagreed, as we believe, with Marlborough in leaning at all in 1707 to the Tory connection, but was both unable and unwilling actively to oppose his inclinations. With his profound experience of English politics, he must have been perfectly assured that as long as Harley was Secretary of State there were certain to be collisions between the Tory and the Whig element in the Government ; yet he was unable to dismiss him or even openly quarrel with him. As Godolphin was compelled to co-operate with Harley, it is probable that he also thought it was well to seem to trust him. Thus when the final breach occurred, it appeared that Godolphin had been deceived, and that Harley was a traitor, though as a matter of fact the one had been scarcely deluded, and in so far as deception was concerned the other had hardly betrayed.

Everything, indeed, which Godolphin saw, everything which he heard, must have warned him of Harley's duplicity. Common report, if nothing else, would have aroused his suspicions, and his suspicions once aroused there was certainly nothing to lull them again into confidence. Harley's character

was the talk of the town; his nickname was 'trickster;' he was notorious for his wiles and his cunning, and was not unconscious himself of the reputation which he enjoyed; at his own dinner table,[1] a table which Godolphin had only just left, his honesty had been sneered at by a great Whig statesman, and an innuendo directed against him, which was perfectly understood by both Tories and Whigs present, and which would never have been uttered or tolerated had it not possessed some foundation of truth. Moreover, Godolphin of all men had probably made the mind of his colleague a study, had searched in its innermost recesses, had examined and considered every crookedness which seemed to mar its perfection and to call for his scrutiny. Even we, after the lapse of nearly two centuries, judging from the fragments of his correspondence, cannot help observing the natural, the almost unconscious falseness of Harley's nature, and it is impossible that Godolphin, who saw him every day, who was intimately connected with him in business, who we may be sure heard every slander against him which malice could invent and party hatred contrive, should have been ignorant of a blemish which was notorious at the time through the whole length and breadth of England, and which neither lapse of years nor painstaking inquiry has succeeded in explaining away. Harley himself has given a perfect description of his own character, and the description was given to none

[1] Campbell's *Lives of the Chancellors*, vol. iv. p. 298.

other than Godolphin. His temper, he said, when once charged with faction, was to go along with the company and give no inconvenience. 'If they should say Harrow on the Hill or by Maidenhead were the nearest way to Windsor, I should go with them, and never dispute it, if that would give content, and that I might not be prepared to swear it was so. I am very sincere.'[1] Such was Harley's conception of sincerity. He was ready to affirm what he knew to be false, provided that he was not asked to do so on oath. A man with a mind so subtle and refining can never be honest, for it is not in his nature to be so. He may be unconscious of his own duplicity, he may deceive himself as he deceives others, he may not even be a bad man, but he will remain essentially a dishonest one. There are men born with moral deficiencies as there are men born with physical deficiencies; and such a man we believe Harley to have been, rather than the self-seeking traitor so frequently described in history. But, whether by nature or by craft, he was false, and we believe that Godolphin before 1707 knew him to be so, and had penetrated his character.

But if Godolphin was ignorant of the suspicions which were entertained by people at large against Harley, and if his eyes were blind to what everybody else saw, there were other considerations which can hardly have failed to strike and enlighten him.

[1] Harley to Godolphin, September 10, 1707. Somerville's *Queen Anne*, p. 625.

Harley's conduct had imposed upon him serious difficulties not unattended with danger. There was scarcely a point from one end of Godolphin's administration to the other which it was more essential for him to press than the appointment of Sunderland as Secretary of State. To accomplish this aim he relinquished his repose, he risked his favour with the queen, he threatened to abandon office; but while he was imploring the queen to receive Sunderland, Harley was doing all in his power to frustrate the design. Nor, as we have so recently seen, was Harley's opposition to Godolphin confined to the privacy of the Cabinet, or to the ear of his mistress in the royal closet, for in 1707 he had the audacity to resist his authority openly in Parliament. Marlborough observed the insubordination of Harley and St. John with a long-suffering composure which can only be accounted for on the supposition that he sympathised to a certain extent with their conduct. But it is certain that Godolphin, who was the head of the Government, and who was responsible for its efficiency, could not see his cherished plans thwarted and his heavy labours doubled without entertaining sentiments of the bitterest dislike to the man who was one of the chief causes of his difficulties.

Nor are these the only reasons for supposing that in 1707 the political views of Godolphin and Marlborough were not in complete harmony. The different manner in which each confronted the em-

barrassments created by the Masham intrigue go far to confirm the conjecture.

As this famous intrigue developed itself the accounts which Godolphin transmitted from time to time to Marlborough on the Continent became most alarming. The condition of affairs which he had to describe to his colleague was, as regarded the ministry, one of absolute collapse. He informed Marlborough of his own waning influence, of the queen's remonstrances and reproaches, of communications once carried on by word of mouth now passing in letters. He informed him of the mysterious conversations between the queen and Harley, of the rising favour of Abigail Hill, of the failing power of the Duchess of Marlborough. He informed him that Harley was on the one hand inflaming the anger of the queen against the Whigs, and on the other instigating her wrath against the ministers, that in short he was jeopardising the safety of the Government and rapidly becoming the controlling power in the State. Reports could hardly have been worse, but they seemed to vex Marlborough rather than to alarm him. Either he did not appreciate the gravity of the crisis which threatened the Government, or he was unable fully to concur with Godolphin in his condemnation of Harley and St. John.

There is still extant a strange proof of Marlborough's infatuation. Godolphin had probably no worse enemy in the Cabinet than St. John; St. John had at one time ventured even openly to

criticise his policy in a hostile manner to Marlborough, and had done so without rebuke. In 1707 he was politically attached to Harley, and the fate of the one was bound up in the fate of the other. It is certainly, therefore, curious to find that while Godolphin was engaged in a death-struggle with the Tories Marlborough should have chosen that moment to bestow a particular favour on St. John. He begged that his services might be rewarded by increased remuneration. Godolphin reluctantly acquiesced in the proposal. His grants to St. John he afterwards affirmed were the only acts of his administration for which he reproached himself.[1] When it is recollected that only a few months before Marlborough had declared in language almost pathetic that he would never keep a friend who was an enemy to Godolphin, both the gift and the time chosen for making it may well excite the most legitimate astonishment.

The labours which the Masham intrigue imposed upon Godolphin were very heavy. The whole weight of its consequences fell upon him. He had to resist as best he could the constant assaults of the Whigs, and the almost openly avowed enmity of the queen ; he had also to consider the advice, not always the best, which he received from Marlborough. Godolphin's rare patience and good sense were tested as they had scarcely ever been tested before. They

[1] Duchess of Marlborough's *Correspondence*, vol. ii. p. 277.

triumphed at last, and they alone saved the Government from dissolution.

The counsel which Marlborough offered to Godolphin during this period of almost superhuman trial was somewhat contradictory, and, in spite of his strong expressions of regard, at times we think not perfectly loyal. Had the position of the ministers been reversed, had Godolphin been advising Marlborough instead of Marlborough Godolphin, how strong a case, we cannot help asking ourselves, would not Marlborough's eulogist, Archdeacon Coxe, have established against the pusillanimity and half-heartedness of the Lord Treasurer? Marlborough's proposals for the defence of the Government fell far short of what was required, and encountered the emphatic disapproval of Godolphin. Strange to say, Marlborough did not, at first at all events, seem to realise the nature of the struggle in which his colleague was involved. He did not recognise that Harley, broken loose from control and acting on his own or the queen's responsibility, could be regarded only as an enemy to be destroyed, or as a master to be obeyed. The conflict, though Marlborough ignored the fact, was no more nor less than a struggle for mastery between two ministers who could never serve again together. No composition between them was possible. They were leaders of antagonistic parties, the representatives of different interests and influences. Those who intended to participate in the combat had to

choose between the standards which they would follow, and to make up their minds that they would conquer or fall with the party of their adoption.

But all this was lost upon Marlborough. The advice which he tendered to Godolphin was absolutely unsuited to the occasion. It might have succeeded with a rebellious under-secretary, but it was quite useless for restraining within limits the transgressions of one of the most powerful statesmen in England. He advised Godolphin to treat Harley as an unruly, but almost contemptible subordinate, to remonstrate with him, to take him before the queen, to argue with him in her presence and convince him of his errors. The queen too was to be scolded, or, to use a euphemism common in the mouths of ministers, to be made to see her own interests. If she endured the scolding and remained obdurate Marlborough reluctantly admitted that nothing more could be done. She must be left to her own devices and bear the responsibility of her own delinquencies. Resignation as a joint measure with Godolphin Marlborough evidently did not at the moment contemplate. 'God's will be done,' he piously ejaculated, upon the supposition that the queen might perhaps prefer Harley's policy to his own; but he clearly did not think that it was any part of God's will that he should resign office. No wonder that Godolphin protested against a course at once so futile and so purposeless; a course which he reminded Marlborough had already been tried on a previous oc-

casion in his very presence and had failed. It was apparent to Godolphin at all events that if Harley was to be crushed, if he was to be anything but First Minister of State, something more than formal remonstrances from the Solicitor-General and solemn audiences with the queen would be required for the purpose.

But Marlborough had another expedient for terminating the bitter controversy in which the Government was simultaneously engaged with both the queen and the Whigs. He thought that Godolphin might be persuaded to resign. If we are to believe Marlborough, he desired in making this strange proposal to consult the happiness of Godolphin rather than the welfare of the country. But Marlborough's protestations should be received with some caution. He was essentially a plausible man ; he always found reasons for what he wanted to do. He was now moved by a great compassion for Godolphin, a compassion so great that he longed to see him liberated from his embarrassments even at the cost of his office. Marlborough, ignorant of his own destiny, declared that a life such as Godolphin's was intolerable, and that for his part he would not endure it for all the world could give. It certainly deserves notice that Marlborough's compassion for Godolphin was excited to this pitch of tender solicitude at the very moment that the necessity arose for him to decide finally between Godolphin and the Whigs and Harley and the Tories. The advice too, moreover, was utterly at

variance with that which Marlborough had tendered to Godolphin under similar circumstances in the preceding year. Then it was Godolphin who wished to retire and Marlborough who wished to prevent him from doing so, and who adjured him by every sentiment of honour and patriotism not to execute a resolution which would be equally injurious to the queen, the nation, and the continent of Europe. On both occasions it is difficult to refrain from the suspicion that there were certain interests which were silently considered, and that those were the interests of Marlborough himself.

Godolphin received the proposal that he should resign with the same disapprobation which he had accorded to the suggestions for remonstrances with Harley and interviews with the queen. He declared that if the matter was one which required resignation, he could not retire alone, that he could not do anything so disgraceful as abandon the queen except on a joint measure with Marlborough. We think that there is scarcely any one in these days who will not consider that Godolphin was right; who will not agree that there could with propriety be no separation between the paths of Godolphin and Marlborough, that they together formed a Government, that they were bound to act as a Government, and to stand and fall together. Well would it have been on a future occasion for Marlborough's fame and happiness, had he like Godolphin recognised the inviolability of the tie which bound them as colleagues together. For

the present, however, Marlborough acquiesced in Godolphin's judgment, and it was resolved that if the queen declined to listen to their representations, they should resign their offices and leave the administration.

There is something very striking in the manner in which this long ministerial struggle terminated, a struggle resulting in one of those bloodless victories which have so frequently adorned the onward march of English constitutional expansion. Marlborough as well as Godolphin became conscious at last that if the Government was to be preserved, Harley must be expelled from it. The two ministers therefore implored the queen to dismiss him from office ; but the queen declined to grant their request.

The refusal of the queen to dismiss Harley left Godolphin and Marlborough with the choice of resignation or submission ; either course was equally open to them. The practice of the time would not have rendered submission either improper or unusual, and the correspondence between the two ministers, which took place in the summer, especially on the side of Marlborough, proves that such a course had been contemplated. From subsequent events, indeed, it may even be doubted whether their resignation, which they now determined to tender, was not merely a tactical stroke to compel Harley to leave the Government, rather than prompted by an insurmountable dislike to serve in an administration in which their policy was not followed. However this may be, upon the queen's refusal to dismiss Harley both Marlborough

and Godolphin resigned. Godolphin's resignation was accepted by the queen without concern. Her life with him had for long been uneasy. He was the main obstacle to Harley's rise and to a Tory Cabinet.[1] Marlborough's loss she deplored more deeply. It was not with Marlborough as with Godolphin. There was no hungry favourite ready to fill his place; no general in England or in the world who was as capable of leading her armies. She begged Marlborough to remain in the Cabinet. Had he consented he would have undoubtedly given the victory to Harley and the Tories, as undoubtedly as at Blenheim he would have given victory to the French and handed over Prince Eugene to destruction had he in the middle of the battle joined with Marshal Tallard; and though Archdeacon Coxe gives him extraordinary credit for constancy in resisting the queen's supplications, we can see but little difference between the two cases. Moreover, Marlborough's eye in the political struggle was as keen, and his judgment as sound, as ever they

[1] I have seen it stated, on considerable literary authority, that, in writing of this period, the use of the word 'Cabinet' is an anachronism. As a matter of fact the employment of the word, in its present sense, was not by any means uncommon in the beginning of the eighteenth century. In 1711 it was proposed to insert the word 'Cabinet' into a resolution to be moved in the House of Lords. The proposal gave rise to a very interesting debate, for which see Cobbett's *Parliamentary History*, vol. vi. p. 971. A similar objection has been made to the use of the word 'Prime-Minister.' This word also was employed in the reign of Queen Anne; for example see *An Inquiry into the Queen's Last Ministry*, written by Swift, within a year of the queen's death, in June, 1715. It is of course unnecessary to add that both words are frequently used by Lord Macaulay in writing the history of a still earlier period.

were on the field of battle. He knew well that the great ministerial struggle was over, that the great political battle was won, and he was the last man in the world to turn aside from an object deliberately sought and now within his grasp. The ministers resigned, but the queen was not convinced. She still required proof of her own weakness and of the strength of her adversaries, and proofs of both were soon provided for her. It became necessary to convene a meeting of the Council; the Council met. The queen presided at the head of the table; the lords sat round it. Harley, uneasy in his mind and conscious that a crisis was approaching, commenced to open the business of his office. His voice was interrupted by murmurs. The queen had deliberately challenged a fall with party power; and in her own palace, in the very privacy of her Cabinet, the mutterings of the storm warned her of the dangers she was running. The Dukes of Devonshire and Somerset, two of the most powerful subjects in England, declared that in the absence of the Lord Treasurer and the General no business could be done. The queen then knew that the struggle in which she had engaged for so many months, in which she had intrigued, and even condescended to deceive, was over, and that the victory was not hers but her enemies', and that nothing was left to her but to eat the bitter fruit of humiliation, and make atonement to those whose advice she had slighted and whose instrument she had now become. Harley was compelled to leave the Government. Godolphin and

Marlborough were reinstated in their places ; but can it be wondered at that the great object of the queen's life should have henceforth been revenge, or that she should have adopted any measure, however dark and obscure, to rid her of those who, she considered, had stript her of independence ?

Thus ended the first phase of the great political conspiracy which was finally in the course of a few years to hurl Godolphin from power. It forms an epoch in the history of the growth of party. The queen was defeated by her ministers, but her ministers conquered by the very influences which they had desired to restrain. They had determined to govern by defying parties; they now acknowledged that to govern at all they must rely absolutely on party. They beat the queen, but they surrendered to the Whigs. Their day-dreams had vanished in the face of reality, and the record of their experiment was closed for ever. In the reign of William, Godolphin had conceived his policy of a third party composed of courtiers ; in the commencement of the reign of Queen Anne he attempted to carry it out ; in the year 1707 he directly opposed a similar scheme when suggested by Harley ; in 1708 by his alliance with the Whigs he finally abandoned it for ever.

The expulsion of Harley from office marks the final change in the character of the Government. It had once been Tory, then hybrid, now it became Whig. The reconstructed administration is remarkable for two circumstances. It contained in its ranks

Walpole—the pupil of Godolphin in politics as he may be almost called—afterwards the greatest Whig leader of the eighteenth century. It was also the first Whig administration since the Union of England and Scotland, and thus Godolphin became the first Whig Prime Minister who presided over the joint affairs of England and Scotland. The Government was to all appearance more solid than it had ever been since the accession of Queen Anne ; yet the rift between Godolphin and Marlborough grew in width as time passed on. It is true that their differences were skin-deep, indeed microscopically small, but even if they never came to a head, if they never influenced the public policy by a hair's breadth, the study of them would tell us more of the minds of Godolphin and Marlborough than the consideration of great public acts which are as often as not the result of compromise, and are not stamped with the individuality of any particular author.

We have already attempted to show that in the year 1707 differences existed between Godolphin and Marlborough on matters of domestic government. During the years 1708 and 1709 other points of disunion were manifested, and the two great colleagues gave proof that their minds were not in absolute harmony, either as to foreign policy or as to the conduct of the war.[1] That there should have been some divergency of opinion on these subjects between the statesman and the soldier was not only natural, but

[1] Coxe's *Marlborough*, vol. ii. p. 387.

almost inevitable. It is remarkable that it did not appear sooner, or entail more serious consequences.

At the commencement of hostilities both Godolphin and Marlborough were actuated by a common motive. They dreaded the preponderance which France would acquire in Europe if the Bourbon family were to succeed to the rich and colossal inheritance of the unhappy King of Spain. They united in supporting that unwieldy but necessary implement for the chastisement of France—the Grand Alliance—which King William had forged out of the jarring elements of international discord; but as time went on they both began to regard the great common object of their policy in peculiar relation to their respective careers. The statesman observed the effects of the war upon the people whom he ruled. He saw that its expenses were crushing them, that, zealous and brave as they were, its increasing burthens inclined them to peace. His own wise administration had so far saved the country from what under less sagacious management might have resulted in financial confusion. His eulogists had once declared that the exchequer had greater credit during the war than it had ever possessed in the most flourishing times of peace;[1] but it must have been perfectly clear to Godolphin as hostilities became protracted and debt rolled up, that such compliments must soon cease altogether, or become the language of the wildest hyperbole. Nobody knew

[1] Cobbett's *Parliamentary History*, vol. vi. p. 453.

better than Godolphin the dangers which beset the impecunious Government of an overtaxed country, and as no man was more prudent or careful, so no man in England, we feel convinced, regarded in 1708 the financial condition of Great Britain with more sincere concern than her own Lord High Treasurer. The national charges had increased to an inordinate extent. In 1701, in the last year of King William's reign, the total expenses for the services of the year were 3,442,315*l.*, and the expenses of the army and navy services 1,538,463*l.*; in 1708 the total expenditure was 7,742,111*l.*, and the expenses of the army and navy 5,320,656*l.* In 1701 the amount applicable to the reduction of the national debt was 2,261,211*l.*, and in 1708, 3,194,922*l.* In seven years the public expenditure was almost doubled. No minister responsible for the finances of the country could fail to be startled by so great an augmentation of the public burthens. Money also had become scarce, and its want inconvenient. The dearth of money led to a kind of land crisis. In 1706 the farmers upon many estates were unable to pay their rents, and the land-tax in consequence fell with terrible weight upon those whose duty it was to discharge it.[1]

[1] I have stated this on the authority of the Duke of Shrewsbury. He says in a letter, October 1706: 'Money is so scarce that nobody's rents are paid, which makes the land tax felt heavily.' He goes on to say that his own tenants pay their rents, his farms being under-rented. —Public Record Office, *State Papers*, *Domestic*, Anne, Bundle 12, p. 70. Curiously enough, Burnet in 1706 says, 'the nation did as much abound in money as zeal': vol. v. p. 241. See also Cunningham, vol. ii. p. 133, and Cobbett's *Parliamentary History*, vol. vi. p. 336, note.

The pressure upon the people was indeed heavy; almost everything was taxed. For long the freeholders, weary under the burthens imposed on them, had evinced every symptom of impatience, and it must have been patent to all that a period would at length arrive when the endurance of even the British nation would tolerate no longer the continuance of war. And while England groaned under taxation, while she was making almost superhuman exertions and winning almost incredible victories for the purpose of destroying the power of France, Godolphin observed that Austria, the member of the alliance which was ultimately to derive the greatest benefits from the efforts and achievements of England, was bent merely upon her own selfish aims, that English subsidies which should have maintained troops in the field never found their way out of the grasping hands of the Imperial ministers at Vienna, and that, finally, English soldiers were sent out to conquer a kingdom for those who wellnigh refused to contribute a regiment to the enterprise.[1] He observed that the Dutch, ever sullen and morose, were equally wrapt up in their own particular cares, that the objects of England, the seizure of Dunkirk, the expulsion of the Pretender from France, or the surrender of Spain by France, were to them but as dust in the balance against this town or that

[1] On one occasion Prince Eugene said that 'the German soldiers would rather be decimated than sent to Spain.'—Cobbett's *Parliamentary Debates*, vol. vi. p. 607.

town added to their line of barrier fortresses. It was not without reason that Godolphin began at length to inveigh against the cupidity of Austria, or the selfishness of the Dutch, for they were exhausting the vital springs of English life. The great objects of the Grand Alliance, so far as those objects were yet unfulfilled, he still placed before his eyes; but he had also before him the wants and necessities of the nation over which, under the queen, it was his destiny to rule; he had become identified with its interests, responsible for its welfare, his career had absorbed him gradually into its life, and he daily regarded the great confederacy of nations with less favourable aspect.

But the soldier took another view of the situation. He too desired to humble France, and he saw in himself the instrument chosen by Providence to effect her humiliation. Marlborough was a great statesman and a great general, but he was a European statesman and general rather than an English one, and perhaps the exponent and representative of a sentiment rather than either The overthrow of Lewis XIV. and his generals, and to attain that object the military association of the great Powers of Europe, were the ends for which he strove. For these he imposed upon himself the most stupendous labours; in poor health, often racked with headache, he journeyed in winter from one end of Europe to the other, he submitted to be harassed by Court jealousies, and to see his designs frustrated by pretentious and ignorant generals. His life was one prolonged

effort at conciliation for the purpose of establishing a limited international harmony. It may be said almost without exaggeration that Marlborough thought more of the welfare of the confederacy as a whole, than of that of any single nation embraced in it. At all costs, the confederacy must be held together. The interests of individuals must bend to the common good, even when that individual happened to be England, and the minister who governed her his most intimate friend Godolphin. The emperor might be wrong in nearly everything, huge English subsidies might be wasted or stolen by Imperial ministers, Imperial troops which should have been engaged in the common cause might instead be plundering the fertile regions and wealthy cities of southern Italy; all this had to be tolerated and condoned lest Austria should fall away from the general alliance, and the war come to an end. Thus Godolphin and Marlborough were inspired by sentiments which to a greater or less degree must always distinguish the statesman and the soldier—the man who achieves success in establishing the peace, wealth, and commercial prosperity of his country, and the man who achieves success in exchanging this wealth and peace for great military triumphs, and the exaltation of national pride.

As early as 1707 there are indications that the various influences of their offices were already drawing Godolphin and Marlborough in different directions. Godolphin evinced a certain dissatisfaction with the war by expressing the highest indignation

against the allies. The war in itself, and in the abstract, he was ready and anxious to prosecute; but if hostilities were to be carried on, as in fact they were being carried on, if members of the alliance were to consider merely their own interests and not the common interests of the confederacy, then Godolphin submitted to Marlborough the propriety of deserting the Grand Alliance and entering into a separate peace with France. It is true that the idea of a separate peace was abandoned by Godolphin almost at the moment of its suggestion, and it is possible that the suggestion itself may have originated as much in anger as in reason; it is, however, remarkable that he should have ventured to pronounce a word which he well knew was unwelcome to Marlborough's ear. But peace or no peace, Godolphin viewed the conduct of Austria with unconcealed disapprobation. Her wavering policy when the invasion of Provence and the proposed siege of Toulon were discussed filled him with resentment; no event since the breaking out of hostilities had interested him so much; to no military undertaking was he prepared to attach greater importance. He rightly considered that success at Toulon would have a decisive effect upon the course of the war, and he was utterly unable to pardon the selfishness which induced the Austrians to obstruct the design, that they might employ more troops in the invasion of the Neapolitan territory, or to admit for an instant the truth of the ridiculous and audacious assertion made by Count Wratislaw, and

too readily acquiesced in by Marlborough, that in the invasion of Provence Austria risked her army for the sake of England. Godolphin brushed away with contempt the paltry excuses of the Austrians. 'Had they ever had Italy or an army,' he exclaimed, 'but for the extraordinary effort and expense of England, and is it now thought too much to do what is really the most solid advantage to themselves only because it is particularly grateful to England?'[1] Godolphin's animosity against the Austrians must have caused Marlborough fresh perplexity. For years he had been attempting to effect a composition among the allies; now he found a source of discord and opposition in his own ministry. At home, as we have already stated, this was the year of troubles. Harley and Godolphin struggled with the queen as champions of the claims of Whig and Tory. This was the year of Marlborough's compassion for Godolphin, of his regard for the repose which his friend so much needed. This was the year when he suggested to his son-in-law Sunderland that it might be well if the Lord Treasurer were tempted to resign.

Nor as this long war proceeded did it appear that the General and the Minister were always united upon the best methods of conducting it. Godolphin had consistently advised the invasion of the French coast, trusting for ultimate success to internal discord. The invasion of France has been called Godolphin's

[1] Godolphin to Marlborough, $\frac{\text{July } 25}{\text{August } 5}$, 1707. Coxe's *Marlborough*.

favourite scheme. He advocated it at times throughout his entire administration, and to attack Calais and Boulogne was his last advice to Marlborough on his dismissal from office in 1710.

The policy of Godolphin in desiring to invade France was neither foolish nor rash, and he had every reason to hope that it would be successful. The revelations of history are in its favour, and, perhaps what is more important, so are the opinions of the great commanders, his contemporaries, and enemies. France was far weaker internally than she was on the frontiers. On the frontiers she was defended by veteran troops led by generals whose military reputations, if less splendid than those of Marlborough and Eugene, were still highly and justly extolled; while in the very heart of the kingdom anarchy reigned, and rebellion defied every effort of the royal marshals who vainly endeavoured to crush it. Looking back with all the advantages which we derive from the light of history, it almost appears to us that nothing but reprehensible neglect could have prevented the allies from availing themselves of a combination of domestic circumstances which seemed so fatal to France. The Duke of Berwick, who was acquainted with all the conditions of the Camisard rebellion, and had every opportunity of estimating its gravity, was filled with surprise at the apathy which the allies displayed towards it. Never, indeed, was a fairer opportunity lost of inflicting a mortal blow upon France. Had the wide world been sought

through, it is probable that no better instruments than the Camisard soldiery could have been found for the overthrow of Lewis XIV. Men fired with religious fanaticism, hopeless of pardon, one day clinging to the woods and caves of the mountains like wild beasts to their covert, and on another emerging almost like the same wild beasts to fall upon their prey in some unexpected spot; men with 'no place left for repentance, none for pardon left,' they were made of the very material to prove themselves dangerous foes to France, had their power been properly utilised. But the auspicious moment was allowed to pass unheeded away. The spark of insurrection which might have been fanned into a flame to consume an entire country was permitted to expire from sheer inanition, and the allies, who might have crippled France with ease had they attacked her where she was weakest, dashed themselves to pieces on bulwarks which science and courage had rendered almost impregnable.

Godolphin, it appears to us, was the only statesman in England who truly appreciated the political and social condition of France at this time, and saw how easy it would be for the allies to take advantage of it. He had always, as has been said, shown an inclination to direct small expeditions against various points on the French coast. But his plans had never been received with favour by Marlborough. Regarded merely from a military point of view, without any knowledge of the political state of France, it is

very possible that his projects may have sounded rasher than they in fact were. But it is clear that it was not only from a military standpoint that Godolphin regarded his projects, that it was not only upon the efforts of the British soldier that he solely relied for success. As existing documents prove, he was acquainted with the sentiments of the people among whom his soldiers were to disembark, and he had good reason for supposing that, far from being hated as foreign intruders, they would be received with the acclamations due to those who come to liberate a miserable people from intolerable oppression. The most secret inclinations of the peasants of Normandy and Brittany had been revealed to him through sources of private inquiry. He knew that they groaned under an almost insupportable taxation, that they were the victims of an almost unendurable tyranny, that their prayers daily ascended to heaven for the liberty of conscience which a bigoted priesthood withheld from them. He knew, in short, that a misgoverned people, slaves in person and slaves in mind, panted for the restoration of freedom, and that the downtrodden peasantry of France were ripe for rebellion, and knowing all this, Godolphin indeed knew enough amply to justify his designs of invasion.[1]

[1] See a letter, dated October 1706, from R. Lundie, an English officer who had been taken prisoner by the French, and who had been confined in prisons in Normandy and Brittany. *State Papers*, Public Record Office. A considerable number of letters preserved in the Public Record Office testify to the minuteness of Godolphin's information on this subject.

Thus Godolphin planned to reduce France by availing himself of civil strife. It is doubtful how far Marlborough agreed with him; if he did he did so without enthusiasm. Marlborough, it seems to us, never cordially entered into the military schemes of Godolphin. Wrapt up in his own designs, he was more eager to render the weapon which was to destroy France strong and efficient, than he was to study the inherent weaknesses of the enemy in which he hoped shortly to plunge it. Thus in 1707, when Godolphin proposed that an expedition should be landed at Rochefort and Saintes to rouse the Protestants of Saintogne, and to act in combination with the advance of the allies upon Toulon, Marlborough opposed it. He observed, perhaps with truth, that the time of year was too late. But, as a matter of fact, Marlborough cared but little for those wars which took men away from his own standards. He had determined that the theatre of hostilities should be the Rhine, and that the armies which should penetrate into France should advance from the Rhine. He took little—too little—interest in those various projects which so constantly employed the thoughts of Godolphin. It is doubtful even whether the invasion of Provence and the capture of Toulon, which so deeply attracted the Lord Treasurer's attention, ever in an equal degree enlisted the sympathies of Marlborough.[1] Yet the town of Toulon was worth

[1] It would be unjust not to state that Marlborough in 1711, during the debates on the war in Spain, fully acknowledged in the House of Lords the importance of the policy of invading Provence.

a great sacrifice; its loss to France would have been irreparable; it was one of the first naval arsenals in France; it contained magazines valued at many millions of money, besides five thousand pieces of cannon. Had it capitulated, the war in all probability would have been terminated at a stroke. It was the dilatoriness of the allies, rather than the measures of the French, which saved to Lewis one of the first cities in his empire. Those words, too late, which Marlborough employed in regard to the proposed expedition against Rochefort explain with a fatal accuracy the reason of the disaster which overtook the allies in Provence. Had the leaders of the allies—had, we believe, even Marlborough been inspired with the energy of Godolphin and gifted with his sense of the importance of the occasion, it is possible that the history of this campaign might have been written in other characters; it is possible that the misfortunes and horrors which attended a retreat through impenetrable woods and intricate morasses, across flooded and dangerous streams, among an armed and hostile peasantry, inflicting losses almost more serious than the losses of battle, might never have taken place, and that Prince Eugene's splendid army, instead of returning to Italy as a wreck, might have dictated peace to Lewis from one of the principal towns in his dominions.

It is not, however, till 1709 that the differences between Godolphin and Marlborough attain a sufficient magnitude to attract historical attention;

though somewhat in advance of our narrative, we will proceed to consider them here, and thus close one branch of our subject.

In the year 1709 Europe became inspired with the hope that the war might at length end. Both sides engaged in it were thoroughly exhausted ; but the exhaustion of France was greater than that of the allies. France was not only exhausted, but prostrated. Her male population had been swept away by the ravages of war, and women had in many places to perform the laborious duties of men ; commerce and manufactures were annihilated, public credit was destroyed, and the revenues were anticipated by every method of fraud and artifice ; the circulation of fictitious money was forced ; mint bills which were issued in imitation of English bills of exchange had suffered a discount of 58 per cent. ; the cost of bread had risen to famine prices, and had entailed the most enormous suffering ; in Orleans alone it is stated that numbers of the people died of sheer starvation ; want and war had produced universal crime and discontent ; banditti swarmed in the highways, and tumults raged at intervals in the cities. The state of France was one of abject misery and more than incipient ruin ; both at home and abroad the situation was equally threatening, and required immediate repose from the exhaustion of war ; and thus it became known that, vanquished in many battles, his frontier fortresses in the hands of his enemies, and the road to Paris open, Lewis

was at length prepared to entertain proposals for peace.

Negotiations were immediately set on foot, and it was soon discovered that France was ready to make large concessions to the demands of the allies. The hopes of England and of Europe were excited, and the prospects of peace from being a mere fitful and shadowy expectation, a phantom even in the minds of the sanguine, became a matter amounting nearly to certainty. At last it seemed that the long war was indeed to end; at last the annual succession of triumphal thanksgivings in St. Paul's Cathedral for bloody victories was to be terminated by a splendid celebration in honour of the return of national harmony; at length the Queen, Lords, and Commons were, in the turgid rhetoric of parliamentary compliment, to congratulate each other not on a battle won, but because the necessity for battles had passed away. Marlborough himself, who had gained in the war not only reputation but wealth, anticipated with delight the moment when he should exchange the hardships of the camp for the pleasures of his somewhat tumultuous home. But these bright expectations were not destined to be realised, and those who sighed for peace were doomed again to witness the horrors of war.

This terrible misfortune was due to the severity of the terms which the allies attempted to impose on the French. The concessions of Lewis were enormous; but they were insufficient to gratify the

greedy and grasping spirit of the allies. Lewis was prepared to surrender the whole Spanish monarchy. The allies demanded that he should not only do this, but that he should surrender Spain within two months ; and that, if at the end of two months the Duke of Anjou was still in possession, Lewis should assist them to hurl from the Spanish throne the grandson whom it had been the object of many years of his life to establish on it, and in whose cause he had lavished the wealth and manhood of a nation. Had France agreed to such conditions as these, she would have incurred degradation equal to conquest. Weak as she was, she was not yet absolutely devoid of strength. She preferred the uncertain fortune of renewed war to a disgraceful peace, and those who proffered her terms so odious must without doubt either have counted upon the result, or have been singularly unsuccessful in penetrating the character of the great monarch and the great nation to whom they were opposed.

Archdeacon Coxe, in his 'Life of the Duke of Marlborough,' ventures, we think, to distribute the blame for the failure of the negotiations in 1709 somewhat unevenly. Popular opinion at the time ascribed their collapse to Marlborough ; and it is certainly not unnatural to believe that a brilliant and successful general might regard with satisfaction the prolongation of a war which had rendered him famous. Archdeacon Coxe, however, is anxious to show that the accusation was unjust, and he endeavours to

remove the stain, if it may be called one, from the memory of Marlborough, and fix it as a blot on the statesmanship of Godolphin.

The accusation against Godolphin is a strange one, indeed, to drop from the pen of Archdeacon Coxe, for, if true, it is absolutely impossible to reconcile it with the Archdeacon's frequently expressed opinion of Godolphin's character. From one end to the other of his interesting and valuable work on Marlborough, he loves to contrast the nature and dispositions of the two great ministers. Godolphin is the scale by which he measures Marlborough, the foil by which he displays him ; Godolphin was feeble and wavering, Marlborough strong and decided ; Marlborough weighted by the business of nations, yet erect under the burthen ; Godolphin bending under the lesser load of domestic troubles, yet unable to sustain it without the assistance of Marlborough. When Marlborough was weak, as to his misfortune he sometimes was, we are told that it was because he followed the advice of Godolphin ; when Godolphin was strong, we are told that it was because he adopted the counsels of Marlborough. Such is the picture which Archdeacon Coxe draws of Godolphin, such is the impression which his book conveys to the mind. What, then, are we to think of his accusation that Godolphin in 1709 caused the failure of the negotiations with France ? During the whole of Godolphin's administration no matter of greater importance than the consideration of these negotia-

tions came under the attention of the Government. Are we to believe that Godolphin, the timid and the irresolute, actually decided a most momentous point, and that point, it may almost be, said in Marlborough's special province of affairs, without, if not against, Marlborough's advice ? If so, the reproach of timidity and dependence falls for ever to the ground, and Godolphin must be regarded as a man who courted rather than shunned responsibility. For our part, we neither believe that Godolphin was at any time timid, in the ordinary sense of the word, nor that the miscarriage of the treaty in 1709 was at all due specially to him or to any individual among his colleagues. We think that in 1709 the Dutch, the English, the suffering people of all nationalities, were anxious for peace, and prepared to make great sacrifices to obtain it, but that the princes, the leaders on both sides, and the English Cabinet, were not yet ripe for it. We must, however, assert our emphatic opinion that of all English statesmen none at this time was so ready to enter into a reasonable peace as Godolphin, and that in his desire to obtain it he came into conflict with Marlborough on more than one point of importance. For this opinion we shall attempt to supply a few of our reasons.

Godolphin in 1709 expressly stated that without peace everything in England would fall to pieces. It is then scarcely reasonable to suppose that he was the author of terms which rendered peace in that year

almost impossible. He further declared that if a peace was not effected he would in the session of 1709 be surrounded by the same difficulties caused by the same persons as in the session of 1708. These difficulties had almost overwhelmed him; when he strove against them his spirit had waxed faint within him, and he would gladly have cast off the burthen of office had a sense of public duty not forbidden him to do so. It seems then very improbable that Godolphin should have been willing to revive the perplexities which a few months before had rendered life to him intolerable, by originating terms of peace which were almost certain to fail, thus plunging himself and his Government into inextricable confusion. But even admitting that Godolphin, weary as he was of the war, nevertheless from a high sense of public duty was ready to run large political risks for the purpose of extracting from France such terms as few countries would be inclined to grant unless dictated by a victorious army in its capital, it is probable that a statesman so experienced as Godolphin would have been prepared for an immediate resumption of hostilities in the event of the probable rejection of the treaty. But this was not the case. Godolphin was not prepared, and was not preparing to resume hostilities. Marlborough, indeed, demanded an augmentation of troops. Godolphin resisted it.[1] Preparations for war, it may readily be admitted, are sometimes the best way of securing a peace; but as a matter

[1] Coxe's *Marlborough*, vol. ii. p. 387.

of practice rather than of policy, it is undoubtedly the habit of countries and generals who intend to fight to increase their forces, and of countries and ministers who are bent on peace to reduce them beyond even reasonable limits. The augmentation of the military forces under Marlborough formed a real and unquestionable point of dispute between the statesman and the soldier. It does appear to us to be inspecting the matter with inverted mind to discover from this and other similar circumstances that the minister who declined to augment the army and send troops into the Low Countries was practically urging, by proposing an impossible treaty, a policy of war, while the general who was clamouring for troops was the advocate of a policy of peace.

There remains another circumstance which indicates differences both of opinion and policy between Godolphin and Marlborough at this time, and which proves almost conclusively that if Godolphin was indeed responsible for the harsh articles of the French treaty he was under the strange misapprehension that the terms would be accepted. Such an hypothesis is, we think, inadmissible. Godolphin was too experienced a statesman to fall into so egregious an error.

In the summer of 1709 the Barrier treaty was signed by Lord Townshend with the Dutch on behalf of Great Britain with the full approbation of Godolphin. As regarded the Grand Alliance, the treaty could have but one effect, and that was to weaken it. The Dutch hated the war. They had frequently mur-

mured for peace, and it had been long suspected both by Godolphin and Marlborough that they only waited to secure satisfactory terms for themselves to conclude a separate peace, if they could muster sufficient courage to brave the anger of the allies. The Barrier treaty which Lord Townshend signed, gave them, on behalf of the allies, if not all they wanted, at least as much as they were ever likely to get. There was therefore every reason to believe that if such a treaty were ratified by the English Government uncoupled with conditions which should bind the Dutch to the common cause, it would offer a strong inducement to them to withdraw from participation in a war which inflicted upon them endless suffering and threatened them with gigantic perils. Now Godolphin, if he really intended to run the risk of continuing the war, must have felt as strongly as anybody that in the event of the renewal of war his best chance of success depended upon the complete union of the various nations which formed the Grand Alliance. To enter deliberately into a treaty tending to relax bonds which in the event of war or its prospect every argument of reason and policy required should be drawn as close as possible, was an act which could only be prompted by the sentiment that peace was certain. No man who is not bent upon peace, and who is not convinced of its certainty, will voluntarily strip himself of the weapons on which he relies for conquest or defence; yet this is precisely what Godolphin did when he signed a treaty which

rendered it possible for the Dutch, if they chose, to secede from the Grand Alliance. Nor did he act in ignorance. Marlborough energetically pressed upon him the probable consequences of the treaty. Godolphin seemed half convinced by his arguments, but he refused to prevent its execution. The treaty was signed without Marlborough's concurrence, Godolphin remarking that it would not be followed by the fatal consequences which the Duke apprehended.[1]

There seems but one conclusion to draw from these circumstances. Had Godolphin been firmly determined to press upon the French the alternative of making larger concessions to the allies as a condition of peace, or of continuing a war which had hitherto been disastrous to them, he would certainly not have adopted a policy calculated greatly to diminish the effect of his menaces, while it added to the probabilities of the prolongation of war, and reduced the chances, if the war was prolonged, of bringing it to a successful issue. Thus his policy in reference to the Dutch seems to us to have been entirely shaped upon the assumption that peace was certain. It was essentially the policy of a peaceful man. The advocates for war, whether open or concealed, would have argued after the fashion of Marlborough against the Barrier treaty. It is scarcely credible, on the other hand, that any one who was not determined at all hazards to secure peace should have promoted a treaty

[1] Coxe's *Marlborough*, vol. ii. p. 416.

which might in its consequences entail upon those who framed it an unequal war. Both Godolphin and Marlborough were, in their way, earnestly desirous of peace, but it is certain that the man who desires peace while he makes active preparations for war is less warmly disposed to it than the man who desires it, and is so determined to get it that he makes no preparations at all.

From these matters of a somewhat close detail we must now rapidly glance at the concluding period of Godolphin's life, and trace it from the downfall of Harley to Godolphin's death in 1712.

## CHAPTER XI.

### DISMISSAL AND DEATH.

More than two years elapsed after Harley's disgrace before the queen was able to avenge herself upon her rebellious ministers, and it was not till 1710 that she ventured to make those changes in her government which ultimately led to the fall of Godolphin.

In the meanwhile Godolphin's victory over the queen had brought him neither repose nor satisfaction. The years 1708 and 1709 were in every respect the counterpart of those which preceded them. There were the same wrangles between the ministers and the queen; there existed the same want of confidence between the Whigs and the ministers; the queen was at one end of the political beam, the Whigs at the other, and the laborious task of preserving the equipoise fell to Godolphin. Religious embarrassments began also to distress him. Sacheverell's trial took place, and ridiculous statements were circulated averring that proceedings taken for the purpose of defining the principle of the revolution had in fact been instituted because a rude and ill-conditioned clergyman had in a sermon compared Godolphin to the voluptuary, mountebank, and

knave whom Ben Jonson has introduced to the world under the name of Volpone.[1] Nor, as time passed on, was he as able as formerly to bear the fatigues of his office, or the peculiarly harassing duties which fell to his lot. He was no longer young, and his constitution was already impaired by a disease which was destined, after agonising torments, to put an end to his existence.[2] He was tired out, he exclaimed; the life of a slave in the galleys was a paradise compared with his. He tried in vain to resign; he entreated the queen either to follow his counsels or to dismiss him, but she tacitly refused to do either one or the other.

In 1710 the queen delivered the first of those blows which in the course of a few months were to shatter Godolphin's ministry. Its weight fell principally upon Marlborough. Without asking the consent of Marlborough, whom as Commander-in-Chief she was bound to consult, and fully conscious of his

[1] Burke, in an appeal from the New to the Old Whigs, says of this trial: 'It was carried on for the express purpose of stating the true grounds and principles of the revolution; what the Commons emphatically called their *foundation*. It was carried on for the purpose of condemning the principles on which the revolution was first opposed, and afterwards calumniated, in order by a juridical sentence of the highest authority to confirm and fix Whig principles, as they had operated both in the resistance to King James and in the subsequent settlement, and to fix them in the extent and with the limitations with which it was meant they should be understood by posterity.'

I have not discovered when Godolphin was first called Volpone, but the name is to be found as early as 1705 in the poems on State affairs.

[2] He was suffering from stone. According to the Duc de Dangeau, he refused to undergo the operation of cutting. *Journal de Dangeau*, Friday, October 7, 1712.

disapproval, she appointed Lord Rivers Governor of the Tower, and gave to Mr. Hill, Mrs. Masham's brother, the command of a regiment rendered vacant by the death of Lord Essex. How Marlborough declared that he would resign, how he retired in sulky state to Windsor Lodge, how some of the Whigs strove to confirm him in his resolution, while others, with Godolphin at their head, laboured to reconcile him to the queen, and how a cold reconciliation was at length effected, are matters of general history which need not be more than touched upon here. That Marlborough should either have resigned, or insisted upon ample reparation for a deliberate and wanton insult, there can be no doubt. That he did not do so, must always in some degree cast a stigma upon his political reputation.

Archdeacon Coxe lays, as he is so fond of doing, in this case as in many others, the responsibility for Marlborough's errors on Godolphin's shoulders. Godolphin's advice, he says, was spiritless, his policy nerveless. His timid counsels palsied the vigour of Marlborough's sound judgment, and led him to consent to an imprudent and unworthy submission. His strictures we think are harsh and unjust. There is nothing to prove that the advice given by Godolphin was not entirely in accordance with Marlborough's own secret wishes. Judged by the light of after events, it may well be reasonably doubted whether Marlborough was really sincere in his proposal to resign, whether it was not a threat made only with

the view of terrifying the queen. Two years before a threat of a similar nature had been followed by complete success. Why should it not succeed again ? Marlborough was in truth, on some points, not a man of very delicate feeling. His love of office, or, as he would have said himself, his love of his country, too often made him forget what was due to his own self-respect. It is ridiculous and misleading to ascribe to the malign influence of Godolphin errors which were in truth attributable to an unfortunate frailty of character. Marlborough was a man not only of commanding genius, but possessing an almost abnormal power of making up his mind speedily, independently, and decisively. Yet Archdeacon Coxe would have us believe that this powerful character was swayed in matters of paramount importance to his public success and private reputation by Godolphin, whom in other places he describes as a man scarcely rising above the level of mediocrity, and always leaning on his stronger colleague for support. Both before and after Godolphin's dismissal, Marlborough submitted to indignities which no man of high honour would have tolerated, and in respect to which the conduct of an individual cannot possibly be regulated by the advice of a friend. The post of Commander-in-Chief which he held with such distinction was offered by the queen to the Elector of Hanover. Marlborough was acquainted with the proposal, but did not raise even a whisper of remonstrance. His old subordinate, St. John, treated

him with imperiousness; the queen addressed him harshly and offensively; he endured their slights with the meekest fortitude. At length the queen informed him that she intended to dismiss the duchess. By most men such intelligence would have been received as the notification of disgrace, and would have inspired some spark of resentment, even, we should have thought, in the obsequious bosom of a courtier. But with Marlborough it produced no such effect. Regardless of the provocations which had already been showered upon him, he begged, prayed, and finally went down on his knees, imploring the queen to alter her cruel decision. He was prepared to commit any act of self-abasement so long as he might keep office. It is painful to be obliged to record the degradation to which, after Godolphin's dismissal, this great man voluntarily submitted; but justice to the memory of Godolphin renders it necessary to repel the aspersions which Archdeacon Coxe so constantly casts upon his judgment and courage.

This affront to Marlborough greatly injured the decaying credit of the Government. It became clear to the courtiers and those political parasites who ever side with the strongest that the prosperous days of 'the family' were numbered. The queen in her dispute with Marlborough had won a great moral triumph. All the advantages of victory remained to her. The ministers were depressed, the Whigs divided. Under the circumstances she wisely considered the moment auspicious for pushing forward

a regular attack, and in April, without consulting Godolphin, she took away the Lord Chamberlain's staff from Lord Kent, and gave it to Shrewsbury.

This proceeding on the part of the queen was a direct insult to Godolphin. The time had now come when he should have listened to neither remonstrances nor explanations, but should have resigned at once and without hesitation. Why he did not perform a part which both his honour and inclination demanded, it is difficult to imagine. It is impossible to believe that he cared for office for office' sake. His labours were too severe and thankless, his health was too bad, his wish for retirement too frequently and earnestly pronounced, to make such a circumstance probable. His position was unlike that of Marlborough. However distraught Marlborough might be in England, and however uneasy in the favour of the queen, he was still the successful leader of a great and victorious army abroad, and his career might yet open to him fresh fields of glory and triumph. With Godolphin it was different. His life was spent ; no triumphs, or the possibility of triumphs, awaited him ; no expectation of victory brightened the clouds which brooded over his future ; his life was embittered by daily mortifications ; he observed his rivals gradually but certainly supplanting him, and he must have been conscious that whatever might be the destiny of his party, for himself he could never look to the restoration of power and favour. There is only one explanation of conduct

which seems so perverse. We think that Godolphin was profoundly aware of his own importance to Marlborough, and felt that if he were withdrawn from the control of the Treasury, the war which Marlborough directed would speedily come to an end for want of supplies. A strong sense of public duty impelled him to hold an office which we believe, had his own feelings alone been consulted, he would most willingly have resigned.

To people of the present age the act of the queen in appointing Shrewsbury to the Government without consulting the Prime Minister would seem at once to seal the fate of the ministry; but, strange as it now appears, this was not the case in 1710; and Shrewsbury's appointment was not regarded by Godolphin as of such fatal augury as might have been expected. The appointment, and more especially the manner of making it, undoubtedly displayed the queen's hostility to the ministers, but the full extent of the misfortune could not be appreciated till it was discovered whether Shrewsbury was a friend or a foe; that the queen should have placed him in the Government with any other view but that of opposing Godolphin it is extraordinary that anybody should for a moment have doubted. So uncertain, however, was Godolphin on this point, that in the month following the date of Shrewsbury's appointment we find him stating his conviction to Marlborough that Shrewsbury was, as he expressed it, with them. This political blindness is probably

due to two circumstances: the mysteriousness which shrouded personal politics during the Harleian epoch, and the old and friendly connection which in previous years had subsisted between Godolphin and Shrewsbury.

Shrewsbury had in the earlier years of Godolphin's administration been an attached friend to both Godolphin and Marlborough. They had pressed him on the accession of Queen Anne to accept office in the Government, but he had declined. He left England, and for a considerable time resided at Rome, the climate of which he found suited to his delicate health, rejoicing probably at having a good excuse to absent himself from political strife in England. On his return to his native country the intimacy with Godolphin and Marlborough was maintained, but there was apparently excited in Shrewsbury's mind some cause of anger against his former friends. Godolphin, it is said, had offended him by declining to procure him a pension; according to another account the Duchess of Marlborough had treated his Italian wife with coldness; and again, that the Viceroyalty of Ireland had been given to Wharton when Shrewsbury thought that it should be conferred on himself. Whatever truth there may be in these various tales, Shrewsbury undoubtedly had some reasons for resentment, real or fancied, over which he brooded in angry silence. Shrewsbury's disposition towards the ministers was not lost upon Harley, who gradually cast over him the net of his intrigue.

To Godolphin the intercourse between Harley and Shrewsbury was not unknown, but Shrewsbury's tact to a certain extent disarmed his suspicions, and thus when the queen named Shrewsbury for office Godolphin still conceived it possible that he might at least not find an inveterate enemy in one of his earliest friends. When, therefore, Godolphin received the queen's letter informing him of Shrewsbury's appointment he did not resign, but he returned the following reply, which, as a specimen of his style of addressing the queen, and of the fashion of correspondence of those days between sovereign and minister, we insert in full:—

Newmarket, April 15, 1710.

'I have the honour of your majesty's letter of the 13th, by which I have the grief to find that which you are pleased to call spleen in a former letter was only a true impulse and conviction of mind that your majesty is suffering yourself to be guided to your own ruin and destruction, as fast as it is possible for them to compass it to whom you seem so much to hearken. I am not therefore so much surprised as concerned at the resolution your majesty says you have taken of bringing in the Duke of Shrewsbury; for when people began to be sensible that it would be difficult to persuade your majesty to dissolve a parliament which for two winters together had given you above 6,000,000*l.* a year for the support of the war upon which your crown depends; and even while that war is still subsisting

they have had the cunning to contrive this proposal to your majesty which in its consequence will certainly put you under a necessity of breaking the parliament though contrary I yet believe to your inclinations.

'I beg your majesty to be persuaded I do not say this out of the least prejudice to the Duke of Shrewsbury; there is no man of whose capacity I have a better impression, nor with whom I have lived more easy for above twenty years.

'Your majesty may remember, that at your first coming to the crown I was desirous that he should have one of the chief posts in your service, and it would have been happy for your majesty and the kingdom if he had accepted the offer; but he thought fit to decline it, *and the reasons generally given at that time for his doing so do not much recommend him to your majesty's service.* But I *must* endeavour to let your majesty see things as they really are; and to bring him into your service and into your business at this time, just after his being in a public open conjunction in every vote with the whole body of the Tories, and in private constant correspondence and caballing with Mr. Harley in everything; what consequence can this possibly have, but to make every man that is *now* in your cabinet uneasy and run from it as they would do from the plague? I leave it to your majesty to judge what effect this entire change of your ministry will have among your allies abroad, and how will this war be like to be carried on, *in your opinion*, by

those who have all along *opposed* and *obstructed* it ? And *who will like any* peace the *better*, the more it leaves France *at liberty to take their time* of imposing the Pretender upon this country ? These considerations must certainly make Holland run immediately into a separate peace with France, and make your majesty lose all the honour, and all reputation your arms had acquired by the war, and make the kingdom lose all the fruit of the vast expense which they have been at in this war, as well as all the advantages and safety, which they had so much need of, and had so fair a prospect of obtaining by it, and can anybody imagine that after so great a disappointment to the kingdom, there will not be an inquiry into the cause of it, and who have been the occasion of so great a change in your majesty's measures and councils which had been so long successful, and got you so great a name in the world. I am very much afraid your majesty will find, when 'tis too late, that it will be a difficult task for anybody to stand against such an inquiry. I am sure if I did not think all these consequences inevitable I would never give your majesty the trouble and uneasiness of laying them before you ; persuaded as I am that your majesty will find them so, it is my indispensable duty to do it out of pure faithfulness and zeal for your service and honour.

' Your majesty having taken a resolution of so much consequence to your affairs both abroad and at home without acquainting the Duke of Marl-

borough or me with it till after you had taken it, is the least part of my mortification in this whole affair; but perhaps the world may think, the long and faithful services we have constantly, and zealously endeavoured to do your majesty might have deserved a little more consideration.

'However for my own part I must humbly beg leave to assure your majesty, I will never give the least obstruction to your measures, or to any ministers you shall employ, and I must beg further to make two humble requests to your majesty; one that you will allow me to pass the remainder of my days out of London where I may find most ease and quiet; the other that you would keep this letter, and read it again about Christmas and then be pleased to make your judgment who hath given you the best and most faithful advice.'[1]

Thus far the projects of Queen Anne had been completely successful. She had heaped insults on her ministers, and her ministers had not ventured to resent them. The Government was not only discredited, but through her independence of action in the appointment of ministers it was actually in process of dissolution. She determined to press her advantage further; she resolved to drive Sunderland from office. The reasons which induced her to attack Sunderland were perhaps quite as much personal as political. He had been the first of that unwelcome

[1] Oldmixon's *History of England.*

succession of Whig ministers who had been forced upon her. She had vainly struggled against his appointment, and at his hands had sustained the first great humiliation of her reign. He had used his powers as a minister with but small regard to her inclinations, and only two years before had affronted her almost to the extent of earning his dismissal by exercising his official influence to unite the Jacobites and Whigs in Scotland against her government. Moreover, Sunderland was Marlborough's son-in-law, and his discharge from office would be a deadly blow to the credit of the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough. So the queen decided that Sunderland should be the next victim of her anger; nor, though her resolution was delayed, did she care to disguise her intentions. Before the step took place its probability was the talk of the town and in everybody's mouth. 'The affair,' writes Godolphin, 'hangs over us like a cloud ready to break upon our heads.' There was plenty of time for ministers to have taken measures either to prevent it if they had the power, or if they had not, by resigning their offices to save themselves from the indignity of having to endure it. Marlborough and Godolphin, indeed, as usual, talked loudly of resignation; but either they never intended to resign, or they permitted themselves to be cajoled by the queen out of their resolution. 'If he and you,' Queen Anne writes to Godolphin, 'should do so wrong a thing at any time as to desert my service, what confusion might happen might lie at your door,

and you alone would be answerable and nobody else.' A few smooth words were sufficient to appease the gentle wrath of the ministers. They bent their heads and the blow fell. The cloud burst with fatal fury, and Lord Dartmouth took Sunderland's place at the council table. Again Coxe accuses Godolphin of giving Marlborough pusillanimous advice. But when Sunderland was abandoned by the Whigs, of whom he was a chief, when he was deserted by his father-in-law, whose credit more than that of anybody else was concerned in protecting him, it seems unreasonable that the blame of his unavenged fall should be cast upon Godolphin.

But the last and fatal stroke had yet to be delivered. The queen had long made up her mind to dismiss Godolphin, and she now determined to do so. She might vent her revenge on this statesman or that, but, as she well knew, she could not finally revolutionise the policy of the Government or bring her secret advisers into office till Godolphin had ceased to be head of the administration. The dismissal of Godolphin was a task of some peril. He was strong in the House of Commons, and in the event of a dissolution it was impossible to say what might be the verdict of the constituencies. There were those who thought that the Whigs at the next election were sure of a majority, while there were others who were equally confident that the Tories would outnumber the Whigs by three to one. If Godolphin were dismissed, and upon a dissolution the country indeed

decided for the Whigs, then the position of the queen would be infinitely worse than if she permitted matters to take their course. The risk in dismissing Godolphin was considerable, but the queen determined to incur it, and she acted her part with her usual skill and dissimulation.

Godolphin to the day of his dismissal, though conscious that his position was a precarious one, did not know how near the end was.[1] There were numerous reports of his approaching disgrace, but it was impossible to verify them, or to discover whether they had even a shadow of foundation. On one occasion it was said that the queen was going to put the Treasury into commission, and Godolphin, to elicit the truth of the report, seized the opportunity of an audience with the queen to read a letter from Lord Townshend in which this tale was repeated. But the queen permitted the passage to pass without observation, and with merely the faint recognition of a contemptuous smile. From the materials before us it is extremely difficult to state with certainty the precise pretext which the queen selected for the purpose of bringing about the final catastrophe. It seems probable that at a Cabinet Council an altercation arose between Godolphin and Shrewsbury—that the queen, who was present, was drawn into it, and that Godol-

[1] Coxe's *Marlborough*, vol. iii. p. 124. Writing to Marlborough on August 8 to inform him of his dismissal, Godolphin says, 'I wrote to you yesterday, . . . but though I had not the least notice then of what has since happened,' &c., &c. Marlborough's letters display the same surprise.

phin in supporting his own opinions combated those of the queen with unnecessary vehemence. Shortly after this, on August 7, Godolphin had two long audiences with the queen. Finding her, as usual, reluctant to follow the advice he tendered, he represented to her, as he had repeatedly done for the last two years, the mischievous consequences of secret counsels, and asked her whether she wished him to serve her further or not. The queen, without any hesitation, replied 'Yes.'

Some years before the time of which we are now writing, during one of those interviews between Queen Anne and Godolphin which were just beginning to assume a disagreeable character, the queen had told him that she was unable to find words for what she wished to say, and requested him in future to accept her opinions in writing. She preferred, in fact, and perhaps not unnaturally, to convey what was unpleasant in letters rather than by speech. Circumstances may now have recalled to Godolphin the queen's observation. He departed from her on the evening of the 7th, gloomy and dissatisfied indeed, but carrying with him the solemn assurance that she wished him to stay in office. Never was assurance more false! On the following morning a servant in the royal livery[1] left at his house the following note written the previous evening, immediately

[1] Dartmouth gives another version of this, and says that the note was carried by Mr. Smith, a friend of Godolphin.—Burnet, vol. vi. p. 9.

after his audience. 'The uneasiness,' wrote the queen, 'which you have shown for some time has given me very much trouble, though I have borne it; and had your behaviour continued the same it was for a few years after my coming to the crown, I would have no dispute with myself what to do. But the many unkind returns I have received since, especially what you said to me personally before the lords, makes it impossible for me to continue you any longer in my service; but I will give you a pension of 4,000*l.* a year, and I desire that instead of bringing the staff to me, you will break it, which I believe will be easier for both.'[1]

To this letter Godolphin replied as follows:—

'May it please your majesty,—I have received this morning the honour of your majesties letter with your commands in it to break my staff which I have done with the same duty and satisfaction in what relates to myself as when I had the honour to receive it from your majesty's hand. Since your majesty is not pleased to allow me to wait upon you, I must humbly beg leave to take this occasion to assure your majesty in the most sincere as well as in the most submissive manner, that I am not conscious of the least undutiful act or of one undutiful word to your majesty in my whole life, and in the instance which

[1] It is related by Swift that Godolphin on receiving the note of the queen communicating his dismissal, broke his white rod, and in a rage threw the pieces into the fire. Swift is so malicious in every matter concerning Godolphin, that the story can hardly be considered authentic without further corroboration.

your majesty is pleased to give, I have the good fortune to have several witnesses of undoubted credit. I should never be able to forgive myself if I had not always served your majesty with the most particular respect, zeal, and integrity. I shall only add that my heart is entirely sensible of all the honours and favours your majesty has done me, and full of the most zealous wishes for your happiness, in this world and in that to come, which I beg leave to assure your majesty shall always be the hearty and constant prayer of, may it please your majesty,

'The most humble and most dutiful of all your subjects, 'GODOLPHIN.'

Thus fell Godolphin, and thus terminated his long and intimate connection with the queen. From that day to this no English statesman has occupied a position so peculiar. With the last of the Stewarts disappeared the race of ministers who were at once the friends and servants of the sovereigns whose councils they guided.[1]

The fall of Godolphin sent a shock through Europe, for it was justly considered to mark not only the termination of the career of a powerful minister, but to foreshadow a great and signal change in British policy. At the Hague, at Vienna, at Paris, at Madrid, the news created almost as much excite-

[1] In the intimate correspondence between the Queen, the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough, and Godolphin, Godolphin was known by the appellation of Mr. Montgomery.

ment as in London, for it was felt that the backstair intrigues of the British palace had given to Lewis a victory as solid and splendid as had been won by his enemies at Blenheim or Ramillies.

Godolphin accepted his reverses not only with the stoicism of a philosopher, but with the calmness and patience of a really great and noble mind. We cannot refrain from paying him the tribute of our admiration. In the letters to Marlborough in which he announced his dismissal there is not to be found a single word of bitterness or mortification. His generous thoughts were fixed only upon what was best for Marlborough and for his country. 'Though my circumstances,' he writes hardly twenty-four hours after his dismissal, 'at present are a little discouraging, yet nothing can ever make me neglect doing what is best for the whole, or thinking of everything that may be most for your honour and safety.'

Yet to Godolphin deprivation of office must in many respects have been a stupendous misfortune. The loss of position, dignity, and royal favour is, as history too frequently records, a blow very grievous to be borne by human pride. But Godolphin lost more than an office of unrivalled lustre, more than the queen's favour, or the patronage of places coveted by the great and powerful, for on his retirement into private life he scarcely took with him an income sufficient to maintain him as a private gentleman, and he, through whose hands millions of pounds had passed, who, according to Swift's pointless

malice, had angled for men with golden hooks,[1] whose single word was accepted by the moneyed men of London as better security than a nation's credit, possessed, when he left office, an income which did not exceed 1,000*l.* a year. Had it not been for the death of his brother, Sir William Godolphin, to whose estate he succeeded, and the generosity of the Duke of Marlborough, Godolphin when he retired from office would literally have scarcely had enough to live upon.[2] The queen had promised him a pension of 4,000*l.* a year, but the promise was forgotten, and Godolphin had too much dignity to remind her that she had ever made it. At this conjuncture of his life it is impossible to help contrasting his material prosperity with that of Marlborough. Marlborough had acquired vast riches. He had rapidly ascended the ladder of fortune, and every step was a step of gold. He had pensions, and patents, and grants, which should have sufficed the most rapacious of

[1] 'Sid's rod was slender, white and tall,
Which oft he used to fish withal;
A place was fastened to the hook,
And many scores of gudgeons took;
Yet still so happy was his fate,
He caught his fish and saved his bate.'

[2] Sir William Godolphin died in 1710, apparently on Sunday, August 27, leaving 4,000*l.* a year to Godolphin.—Luttrell's *Diary*, vol. vii. p. 623. In a tract on the *State of the National Debt as it stood December* 24, 1716, published in 1727, the writer makes the following observations on Godolphin: 'I believe he (Godolphin) was not of opinion that the wealth, trade, and riches of these kingdoms were too considerable to stand in need of any frugal management: and after many years presiding at the head of the Treasury, he left no acquisitions by his employment, but, without the accidental falling in of the paternal estate, he would have died in want, a glorious example for all his successors to follow!'

spirits. Yet in spite of all his wealth there was ever a morbid craving for more, and we are told by his biographer that 'in no instance did he feel more the loss of his friend in the Treasury, than in the conduct of the Government with regard to the building of Blenheim.' Already the country had lavished 134,000*l.* on this costly pile. It certainly seems to us that fortune, national gratitude, or the royal bounty, distributed favours and rewards with somewhat uneven hand between these two great statesmen.

Of Godolphin's history there is not much more left to narrate. His lease of office and his lease of life were nearly of identical duration. His enemies, however, did what they could to embitter the last year of his existence. The dissolution of Parliament, which so many people thought the queen would never venture to command, and which so many others thought, if effected, would again establish the Whigs in power, falsified the sanguine hopes of the friends of Marlborough and Godolphin. The cry of the Church in danger had not been raised in vain. Sacheverell had made a triumphant progress through the country, inspiring the people, wherever he went, with some vague and indefinite dread that the Government desired to ruin the national religion. The elections came, and everywhere the Tories swept the polls. Among the 511 members representing England and Wales in the last Parliament, we find no less than 248 changes. The composition of the House of Commons which

met at Westminster on November 25 was largely of new material, and as largely composed of those who were disaffected to Godolphin.

In this hostile assembly the opponents of Godolphin directed an attack against him. They accused him of mismanaging the public revenue. A parliamentary inquiry was instituted, and the huge sum of 35,000,000*l.* was declared unaccounted for. In spite of the efforts of Godolphin's adversaries to fix some blame upon him, nothing was accomplished beyond displaying their own malignancy and the injustice of which even a British House of Commons can be capable when lost to every sense except that of party passion. It was shown that to compile this gigantic total, accounts were included which went back to the days of Charles II. With the exception of about 4,000,000*l.*, at that time barely the revenue of a single year, the whole of the 35,000,000*l.* was accounted for. The inquiry, if it proved anything, proved that never had the accounts been so scrupulously managed as in the reign of Queen Anne while Godolphin was Lord High Treasurer.[1]

A strange story, if a true one, is told of Godolphin during the debates on this subject. We give the story for what it is worth, as we have no means of testing its accuracy.

During the negotiations for a union between Eng-

[1] It should be stated to Godolphin's credit that he was one of those counsellors who, at Hampton Court, on July 9, 1702, advised the queen to declare against selling offices and places in her household and family.

land and Scotland 20,000*l.* had been sent to the Duke of Queensberry, the Lord High Commissioner, to use on behalf of the Government. Queensberry, having no necessity for so large a sum, returned 8,000*l.* to the Treasury. Godolphin was now required to account for this surplus. To the delight of his enemies he hesitated and excused himself; he reminded the House of his age, of the lapse of time which had occurred since the payment was made, and simulated an inability to recollect a transaction of such distant date. His opponents, convinced that they were on the brink of an important disclosure, pressed him with greater earnestness. Godolphin then employed the extraordinary artifice of feigning a fit of epilepsy, when, having discovered to his satisfaction the inclination of the House to himself, he produced the queen's warrant for 8,000*l.*, to the astonishment of its members and the confusion of his enemies. The story is told by Cunningham. It seems to us neither in keeping with the dignity of Godolphin's position nor consistent with the somewhat grave and even pompous demeanour for which he was noted.

On June 21, 1712, the queen prorogued Parliament; before it met in the following April, Godolphin was dead. His last appearance in the House of Lords as an active member was apparently on June 7, when he criticised the proposals made by France for admitting England to trade with Spain.[1] The final appearance which he made in Parliament

[1] Cobbett's *Parliamentary History*, vol. vi. p. 1147.

was on June 13, when his name is to be found on the roll of the House of Lords for the last time. At the close of the session it is probable that he accompanied the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough to Holywell House, their residence at St. Albans, for it was at St. Albans not only that he died, but that we see him for the last time in life about a month before his death. The picture which is on this occasion presented to us is as impressive and effective as if it had been composed with a view to dramatic effect.

On the bowling-green of Holywell House, on the banks of the Ver, was pitched, in the beginning of August, the large tent which, during the late campaigns, had been used by Marlborough for councils of war.[1] In it were assembled the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough, Marlborough's son-in-law, the Duke of Bridgewater, Lord Cowper, the great Whig Chancellor, whose unblemished character and legal attainments to this day command the admiration of posterity; and last of all, Marlborough's old friend and tried colleague, Godolphin. Here, among old friends and younger relatives, Godolphin was at length enjoying some of that repose which he had sighed for so frequently, which he had longed for in the days previous to his marriage, which he had dreamt of when a middle-aged and over-wrought statesman. Thus, in the fulness of time, peace, such peace as illness and failing health permit, had come to him; and if he was soon to exchange it for a rest still

[1] Lediard's *Life of Marlborough*, vol. iii. p. 291.

deeper and more profound, there will be many who think that God dealt more mercifully with him than with Marlborough, whose body survived his intellect, and whose life as a reasoning man was extinguished before his feet trod the dark valley of the shadow of death. Godolphin died at two o'clock in the morning of September 15, 1712, in the sixty-eighth year of his age.[1]

The funeral did not take place till more than three weeks after his death. It was apparently attended with no public display, as Swift, writing to Stella on October 9, says, in an early part of his letter, that he hears that Godolphin is to be buried in a day or two, and a little later in the same letter, that he understands the funeral took place 'last night.' Godolphin was not buried with his wife beneath the church at St. Breage, but in Westminster Abbey, and there, in the south aisle, may still be seen the marble slab which commemorates the life and death of the earliest of those great statesmen who adorned the epoch of the eighteenth century, and who, while they rendered Britain happy and prosperous at home, caused her name to be respected and feared by all the nations of the world.

[1] Additional MSS. 15949, British Museum.

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